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W O R D  
IN  
S E A S O N.

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OR  
Three Great Duties of Christians  
in the worst of Times : *Viz.*

*Abiding in Christ, Thirsting after his Institutions, and  
Submission to his Providences.*

The first opened, from 1 John 2. 28. The second  
from Psal. 42. 1, 2. The third from Jer. 14. 19.

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By a Servant of *Christ*s in the Work of his Gospel.

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**To which** is added, by way of Appendix, the Advice of some  
Ministers to their People for the reviving the Power and  
Practice of Godliness in their Families.

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**Gal. 1. 8.** *Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any  
other Gospel, than that which we have preached, let him be  
accused.*

**Ver. 9.** *As we said before, so say I now again, if any man  
preach any other Gospel unto you, than that you have received,  
let him be accused.*

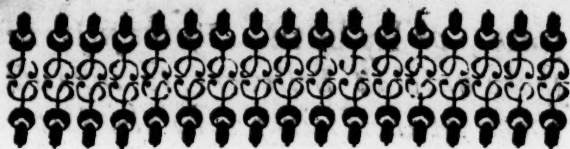
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London, Printed, 1668.

W O R D

NO 1





To all

CHRISTIAN READERS;

More especially such

Who either occasionally or  
more fixedly have at any  
time sat under the Au-  
thors Ministry.



AND by it being dead  
yet speaketh, (*saith  
the blessed Apostle  
of Abel*) either by  
*his faith, by which  
he offered up to God a more excel-  
lent Sacrifice, or by the witness  
which he obtained that he was  
righteous, God testifying to his*  
A 2 gifts;

## To the Reader.

gifts; or by both. By the first he spake unto all Believers, to instruct them in their duty; by the latter he spake unto them, instructing them in the success of duty: by both he speaks unto us to go and do likewise. There are this day many eminent servants of God that must be reckoned amongst the dead, (the greater the lamentation) and not in the Gospel sense, (as the Apostle saith the woman that lives in pleasures is dead while she lives; no, they are persons known to you not to have lived in Ale-houses, in rioting and luxury, but in a daily keeping under of their bodies, that they might be in subjection to their spirits: that whiles they preached to others, themselves might not become reprobates, (according to the Apostles rate of living, 2 Cor. 9. 27.) But they are legally dead, dead as to you, though alive to God,  
aliv-

## To the Reader.

*alive to the world, or rather in the world. Most of these being dead yet speak: their former pains amongst you, their holy conversation while they went in and out before you, speak. Their lives, their labours, their present patience, speaketh. It speaketh what they were, what they are, what you should be. Yea, and some of their written Books yet speak to you, (you have some milk from the bottle, though not from the breast.) The Author of the following sheets is one of those thus dead, your importunity hath made him thus to speak. Something you would have him say. And when you had brought him to a resolution in this to listen to you, he knew not better what to say than, Brethren, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed at his coming. You are his witnesses, that when you heard*

## To the Reader.

*him in the Pulpit, he used not to say to you, Come to me, to my opinion or party; but only, Come unto Christ that you may have life: He pleaded then for his Master, and insisted upon the one thing necessary, having a latitude of charity, (though not an indifferency as to his own practice) for any parties of any perswasion, whom he saw walking in the path of Justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, and in paths of holiness suited to that faith. He thought railing and smiting of little value to the soul, that neither hears the one, nor feels the other; and judge the Scottish Horning, and the English Significavit of equal value for the reformation of mistakes in the understandings of Christians. And that the rational soul forfeited its name that day, that it should be thus conquered. This made him (though he could have wished all*

## To the Reader.

all as he was, excepting the obloquy which men of his perswasion were subjected to, from those who speak evil of the things that they know not, yet in his preaching to pursue a nobler design, and to call you to come to him, who without respect of persons receiveth men of all perswasions, (holding the foundation.) In him, he trusteth, he hath left many of your souls set upon the Rock that is higher than he is, having your faith not standing in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God, builded upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. He being now dead yet speaketh, and speaketh the same language, (after the beloved Apostle) abide in him. He desires this of you, that if the way of worship wherein you (together with him) formerly walked appear less according to the pattern

## To the Reader.

tern of the mount, the rule of  
holy Scripture, than some other, you  
would forsake it, and adhere to  
what you see most conformable to the  
rule of Scripture, the example of  
Christ and his Apostles. He assures  
you he would himself do it, and if  
in any thing he differs from you,  
this is the reason, He sees, or thinks  
he sees, what he embraceth most ac-  
cording to the will of God revealed  
in Scripture. He would in this point  
say more to you, if he did not think  
the holy Scriptures perfect as to a  
rule of Worship, and as able in  
that as in matter of Doctrine, to  
make the man of God wise to  
salvation, and were not afraid of  
making himself wiser than his Ma-  
ster, one piece of whose errand to  
earth was to reveal his Fathers will.  
This hath made him repeat to you  
the Apostles words, Abide in him,  
thinking it the onely thing neces-  
sary for you, and a seasonable  
word,

## To the Reader,

word, *whiles so many tempters en-  
vy you that happy station.*

*As a means in order to this, he  
hath also subjoynd something to  
preserve and quicken your appetite  
to Gospel-institutions. He knows  
that Union is maintained by  
Communion; and that commu-  
nion with God is much in and by  
those appointments of Worship  
which Christ hath instituted. This  
is the substance of the following  
sheets.*

Now the God of peace that  
brought again from the dead our  
Lord Jesus Christ, the great  
Shepherd of the sheep, through  
the blood of the everlasting  
Covenant, make you perfect in  
every good work to do his will,  
working in you that which is  
well-pleasing in his sight, through  
Jesus Christ, to whom be glory  
for ever and ever. *Amen.*





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1 Joh. 2. 28.

*And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*



THE first words of my Text speak the *Penman* to be some aged *spiritual Father*, whose years and authority might justify him in

so relative and familiar a compellation. So indeed he was, not *Paul*, but *John* the aged; the beloved *Disciple*, who had 1 Joh. 1. 1. seen and heard what he declared: and this *Epistle* is judged to have been wrote by him in his extreme old age at *Ephesus*. The true *Shepherds* thus treat

treat their Masters Lambs. The world can find no nick-names harsh, and infamous enough for Saints: the beloved Disciple calls them *Little children*. The words of an aged dying Disciple, and one *who leaned upon our Saviours breast*, are to be regarded: but a greater than the beloved Disciple is here. *John* speaks in his Masters name, and you know it was his Masters language, *Whosoever shall offend any of these little ones*. And again, *Fear not, little flock, it is your Fathers will to give you a Kingdom*. The Scribes and Pharisees of that age gave them other names, Schismatics to the Jewish Church, perverters and seducers of the people, (they never died upon the cross for them, they never travelled in birth for them, till *Christ was formed in them*. Strangers call those rogues, whom Parents call *little children*.) But what says this spiritual Father to these little children? *Abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming*. When our blessed Lord was taken up into heaven, and the men of Galilee stood gazing up

## A Word in season.

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to heaven, two men stood by them in white, saying, *Why gaze you? That same Jesus which is taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him ascending into heaven.* [ So ] as to his Person. God-Man, as he ascended; but not so as to his retinue, for we are elsewhere told, that he shall come with ten thousands of his Saints. And again, That he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire. That he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And this is the coming and appearing mentioned in the Text, which lets us know that Christ is he that is spoken of in this Text, and no other.

Christ never makes an errand into the world for nothing. When he came before, it was to *work out mans redemption*, his next coming will be of another nature. The Apostle tells you, *That God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world.* A truth that solveth that great riddle of Providence, which made so many wise Heathens deny a Deity, and hath made so many good

Acts 1.11.

Jude 14.

2 Thess. 1.

7.

1 Thess. 4.

16.

good Christians sometimes doubt it. *Why the way of the wicked prospers, and the rod of the wicked lieth upon the back of the righteous.* If it were not that we believe that harvest, we should stumble at the long furrows which the plow make upon the backs of the righteous. But this salves all: yet a little while, and the children of God shall be delivered from their prisons, and dens, and furnaces of affliction, and their accusers and persecutors shall supply their places; ah! happy were they if it were no worse ) but flaming fire is much sadder, especially aggravated with the adjunct of eternity ) *For behold he cometh, yea he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.* Would you know who this He is? The Apostle tells you it is the man Christ Jesus, he whom the Jews crucified, he whose Gospel men so much despise, and against whom all imaginable despight is done; he that must not be preached unto people that they may be saved. It is he that cometh. Mens different affections to Christ, is read in all their faces and deportments, or  
suffi-

sufficiently evince, that at this day of  
 his coming there will be differing com-  
 plexions of mens faces : With what  
 faces will they behold this dreadful  
 Judge, who have despised his Blood,  
 obstructed his Gospel, haled his true  
 Disciples into prisons, abused his Mini-  
 sters, concerning whom he hath said,  
*I will be with you to the end of the world ;*  
*and, He that despiseth you despiseth me.*  
 And again, of his Saints in general, *If*  
*any shall offend any of these little ones, it*  
*were better that a milstone were hung about*  
*their neck, and they thrown into the sea.*  
 On the contrary, the righteous will lift  
 up their head when the day of their re-  
 demption comes nigh. They have not been  
 ashamed of Christ, no not of his Cross,  
 and will have no cause to be ashamed  
 at his appearance. This is that confi-  
 dence, and not being ashamed, of which  
 the Text speaketh, unless it be to be  
 understood with a particular reference  
 to the Ministers of Christ, for it is in  
 the first person. *That we may have confi-*  
*dence.* *Isaiah* triumphed in the faithful  
 discharge of his Ministry in this, *That*  
*though Israel was not gathered, yet he*  
*should*

Ezek. 3.

*should be glorified. And St. Paul, that he should be a sweet savour to God, both with respect to them that were saved, and to those that perish. If the Prophet hath warned the sinner, if he die in his sins yet the blood lieth on his own head, the soul of the Minister is free. The case is otherwise if they be not warned, ( God have mercy on those, that out of greediness of lucre take so many of these little children into their care, that they are enforced to put them out to Nurses that have no breasts, where they are starved. ) But yet as the painful Master that hath taken an idle child under his care, who through his own negligence profiteth nothing, yet cannot without some shame, and lothness to hear himself stand to hear his non-proficiency brought to a test: so the painful Minister of Christ will not without some blushing and reluctance at the great day stand and see the many souls under his charge adjudged to eternal burnings. Therefore saith the Apostle That we may have confidence, and not be ashamed. But what should be done by Gospel-professors, that both they and*

the

their Teachers, at the day of Christs appearing, may have confidence, and not be ashamed? This is summed up in a few words, *Abide in him*. But I must not pass over those little particles in the front of the Text. [ *But now* ] It is generally agreed that St. *John* wrote this *Epistle* in a time wherein Professors to Religion had made great *Apostasie*, both in matter of *faith* and *holiness*. *Eusebius* and *Augustine* reckon up nine or ten most erroneous and impure Sects, which troubled the Church in his time. And as it was a time of great *desfection*, so it was a time of most *bitter persecution*. *John* himself was banished into the Isle of *Patmos*, where Christ bare him so much company, and dictated to him the *Revelations*. This Historical Circumstance addeth a great *Emphasis* to those particles in the front of the Text, *But now*. Now when the love of so many waxeth cold, now when the world is so much in arms against Christ and his Gospel, now when the Doctrine of Christ is so much deserted and despised, when the ways of the Gospel are so much defamed, when all manner of uncleanness



*A Word in season.*

ness and leudness so much aboundeth.  
Now, *little children, abide in him.*

In the Text is observable,

1. A familiar Compellation, *τεκνία, little children.*

2. A seasonable Exhortation, *μὲντοι ἐν αὐτῷ, abide in him.*

3. An Argument enforcing this Exhortation, *ἵνα ὅταν, &c. that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, &c.*

This Text affords several Propositions of Doctrine, some more implied, others more expressed.

1. Prop. *That Christ will appear.* Though at present he be personally absent, and disappeareth to his people, yet he will come again, he will appear.

2. Prop. *That at the day of his appearance, some will have boldness and confidence, others will blush and be ashamed.*

3. Prop. *That it is the great concernment of Christians to abide in Christ, and that especially in evil times.*

4. Prop. *4. That a peoples abiding in Christ will adde to a godly Ministers boldness and confidence, when Jesus Christ shall appear in Judgment.*

The third being the main Doctrine



of the Text, is that which I shall only insist upon.

1. Prop. *It is the great concernment of the children of God, the Disciples of Christ especially in evil times, to abide in Christ.*

The foundation of this Proposition in the Text is evident: *But now, little children, abide in him.* Now that the times are thus evil, by the corruption of men on the one hand, by the rage of men on the other hand. Now that there are many Antichrists, by which we know this is the last time, verse 18. Now that many are gone out from us, who were not of us. Now that there are many that seduce you, verse 19, 26. Now abide in him. But for a fuller discourse upon this subject, it will be necessary that I should open to you, Jo. 1. 2.  
18, 19, 26.

1. The meaning of this term, *Abide in him*, that you may know the full import of it.

2. That I should shew you, *wherein this appeareth to be the great concernment of Christians*; 1. *In all times*: 2. *More especially in evil times.*

3. Then I shall bring it home to you

in a more close and particular application.

1. *Quest.* What is the meaning of this Exhortation, *Abide in him?* What is this to *abide in Christ?*

1. *Abide* ] is a term of continuance, and signifies a continuing or persevering in some place, or station, in which a person is, being here applied to *Christ*, it must signify *a perseverance or continuance in union with Christ, or in some station or relation referring to him.* There are three ways by which a man may be said to have a relation to Christ.

1. *Sacramentally.* We are said in Scripture to be *baptized into Christ*, Rom. 6. 3. Gal. 3. 26. not that the person baptized is forthwith *justified* or *regenerated*, (none can maintain that without asserting an *intercession* of the state of *justification*, and total and final apostasy) but by Baptism we are made members of that *mystical body*, whereof *Christ is the head*, (I mean the Church) thus in the strictest sense, those that are baptized are baptized into *Christ mystical*. Christ as the Head of the Church, though not as the Head of the Elect.

From

From this relation to Christ there is no starting, but by renouncing or denying our *Baptism*. Besides, *We are baptized into Christ, as the souldier, by taking his pay, or taking his oath, is listed into an Army*, that is, under an engagement to profess Christ, and to be his servants.

2. *Putatively, or Visibly*. It is a figurative, but very usual expression in Scripture, for men to be said to be, what they judge them selves to be, or what they outwardly own and profess to be; thus the seemingly righteous man is called *righteous*. And in this sense you read of some that *deny the Lord that bought them*, (*καὶ ἀρῶντες*, that is ) and we are bid not with our meat to destroy our Brother, *for whom Christ dyed*.

Thirdly, *More spiritually and really by an union of faith*. Thus that man is in Christ, who *actually believeth*, faith is that grace which makes the true and perfect union betwixt Christ and the soul: I mean that faith which the Apostle calls, *the faith of Gods elect*: the faith that *worketh by love purifieth the heart, gives the soul victory over the world, &c.*

Which faith is not an idle, and inactive quality, but working and powerful justifying it self. 1. By a *profession* owning of, and adhering to the truths of the Gospel. 2. By a *suitably holy life and conversation*. With reference to this, I take the Exhortation.

2. But Secondly, *This Exhortation doth not suppose, that it is possible, that the union once thus made betwixt Christ and the soul can be dissolved.* He that is the *Author*, is also the *finisher* of our faith. *The Seed of God* (saith our Apostle) *abideth in the believing soul.* It is a great mistake of some to conclude, from such kind of Exhortations as these, the possibility of a Christians falling from a state of Grace.

3. But Lastly, *Though a Christian once truly implanted into Christ, and by faith engrafted, cannot but abide in him, being kept by the power of God, and upheld by an everlasting arm.* Yet,

1. *This union on our part must be preserved, by the use of such means as he hath appointed.*

2. *A man may fall away gradually from his profession, and may abate of his practice*

Office in holiness: Now with reference to one or both these, is this Exhortation, and many others of like nature in Scripture which signifie these two things.

1. *Live in a diligent use of all those Sacred Institutions and Means which God hath appointed you in order to your preservation in that state of grace into which the Lord hath brought you, and will by his power, but (through faith on your part) preserve you to salvation.*

2. *And take heed that you abate not in degrees of faith and love.* This now is the meaning of this short Exhortation, *abide in him*, which we shall the better understand by considering other Scriptures, in words, or in sense parallel to this.

It is a phrase we rarely meet with in holy Writings, but only in the Gospel, and Epistles of this blessed Apostle. It was Christs Exhortation, *John 15. 4. Abide in me*, expounded *ver. 7. If any man, abide in me, and my words abide in him. ver. 10. Abide in my love. 1 John 2. 24. it is a little altered, if you abide in that which you have*

*Joh. 15. 4,  
7, 10.  
1 Joh. 2. 6.  
24. 17. 19.  
1 Joh. 3. 6.*

heard. 1 John 2. 26. He that saith he abideth in him, ought so to walk as he also walked, ver. 10. it is called an abiding in light: 1 John 3. 6. Who so abideth in him sinneth not. So then when we are exhorted to abide in him, we are called upon, To take heed of sin, to do the will of God, to walk in the light of truth and holiness, to continue in the owning, and profession of the truths of God which we have heard, to take care that the words of Christ may abide in us. Two things we are called to for: two things we are admonished to take heed of.

1. We are called to, for a stedfast owning of, and adhering to such propositions, as we before by faith have embraced, and been perswaded of from the Evidence of the word of God: and admonished to take heed of disowning, or denying any of them.

2. We are called to, for a conversation close to the revealed will of God, and conformable to that of Christ, and to take heed of any looseness, or remissness in the practice of holiness, whether referring to our more religious homage to God in acts

of

of *Worship* : or to our more ordinary conversation in our behaviour towards men. This is that *abiding in Christ*, which I say, is a duty of so high a concernment to Christians, and that especially in evil times.

I shall First, Evince it of *general concernment to Christians*.

Secondly, I shall shew the *special concernment of it in evil times*.

First, I say, it is of general concernment to profession in all times. This will appear to us, if we consider it as an *End*, as a *Means*, or as a *Condition*, or as an *Evidence*.

1. As an *End*. I mean as a duty of it self falling under a multitude of Divine Precepts. *Obedience to God* in the great business of our lives. In these two words. *Believe and Obey* is summed up the whole duty of man. *Obedience* is our duty to God, as our *Sovereign Lord*. Should not the Servant obey his Master? As the fountain of our *Life and Motion and Preservation*? Should not the Child obey his Father, though he be but in the hand of God a Second Cause of Being and Life, and maintenance to him? Obedience



Obedience unto Christ is yet our further duty upon the account of *redemption*, and *manumission*, as he who hath *bought us*, and that by no mean price out of the hand of our greatest Enemy, and hath brought us into the glorious *Liberty of the Sons of God*. It is he that hath said to us, *Abide in me*: and again, *v. 10. Abide in my love*. I might multiply many Texts speaking, though not in those words, yet to that sense all those precepts that oblige to *perseverance*, to a *further progress and continuance* in the wayes of God: or that caution us against final, or gradual Apostacy, speak all to the same sense. So as if it be any thing the concernment of Christians to fulfill the Will of their Lord, who hath purchased them unto his service with his blood: It is their concernment to abide in Christ.

2. But Secondly, Let us consider it as a *means*. Many things which are not in themselves desirable, are yet valuable with reference to their end. *Finis dicitur amabilitatem mediis*: this is desirable as an end, and as a means also. I will open this in a few particulars.



1. *It is a necessary means in order to the Christians bringing forth fruit. If he abides in Christ, he shall bring forth fruit: if he abideth not in him, he shall not bring forth fruit.* You have both these Propositions from the mouth of him that could not lye, and both brought us an argument to inforce this duty, *John 15. 4, 5. Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine, so no more can you, except you abide in me. V. 6. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit.* It is highly the concernment of Christians to bring forth fruit, the fruits of the Spirit, the fruit of righteousness unto life: It is necessary in order to the glory of God. Herein (saith our Saviour) *is my Father glorified if you bring forth much fruit.*

It is necessary in order to their own salvation. But without their abiding in Christ, they cannot bring forth much fruit: nay, they can bring forth no fruit; you have this in the words of our Saviour, *John 15. 5. Without me you can do nothing.* Nothing spiritually and formally good, nothing that will bring  
God

God any glory, or do us any good. It is a very emphatical Text; he doth not say *Without me you cannot do any great thing* but *without me you can do nothing*. Not without me you can do little, but *without me you can do nothing*. Yea, and in the Greek are *two Negatives*, which in their *Idiome* make a more vehement negation as much as if he said, *you cannot, you cannot do any thing*. But if we had not so direct a Scripture reason standing upon a Scripture foundation would conclude it.

1. It is a Principle in Natural Philosophy, *Operari sequitur esse*, and evident to every Vulgar eye, that where there is no life, there can be no motion or operation proper to that life: All life lies in *some union*: Natural life in the union betwixt the *soul* and *body*, spiritual life in the union betwixt the *soul* and *Christ*. So as till there be such an union, there can be no *spiritual operation*, nor can it be any longer than that union holdeth.

2. Nay further, *Operation depends not only upon union, but upon communion*. Suppose a man to be alive, the union betwixt the *soul* and *body* not dissolved: if any thing hinders the souls communion

is communion with any part ) as in the dead  
 say paralytic, &c. ) it moves, it acts nothing :  
 So it is with the soul, suppose the union  
 with Christ not dissolved, ( that once  
 made cannot be dissolved ) yet if there  
 be not a *communion*, if the soul receives  
 not from Christ, it brings forth no  
 fruit. Yea, and according to the de-  
 gree that it receiveth influence from  
 him, so will its fruit be.

3. Again, it appeareth by the *simili-  
 tude* used by our Saviour, *John 15. 4.*  
 Saith he, *I am the Vine, you are the bran-  
 ches.* Cut off the branch from the  
 Vine, it brings forth no fruit : nay, let  
 it abide in the Vine, if any thing hin-  
 der it, that it receiveth no influence  
 from it, it brings forth no fruit : let  
 it receive but a little influence, it  
 keeps alive, but it brings forth but  
 little fruit : let it on the other side  
 receive much influence from the Vine,  
 then it *brings forth much fruit.* It is  
 the high concernment of the soul, to  
 bring forth fruit, and to bring forth  
 much fruit. Hereby God hath a great  
*deal of glory*, and the *glorifying of God* is  
 the great end of our lives : hereby a  
 Christian

Christian hath much *comfort*, and *peace* and *satisfaction* in his own soul: The *fruit of righteousness is peace and assurance for ever*: and the End of it will be *much glory*: he that brings forth much fruit, shall sit upon a *Throne*. This is my first Demonstration, from the duty considered, as a *means*.

Secondly, Saith our Saviour, *John* 15. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and are burned.* All in a parable, but the sense is easie. *Abiding in Christ is the means, and only means for a Professor to keep up his beauty and glory, and vigour, and to keep him out of Hell-fire.* This is the sense in short of this Parabolical expression. A branch separated from the Vine, is cast aside as an useless thing, not suffered to lye near the Vine, being thus separated and cast out, it *withereth*, wanting the sap and juice of the Vine, by vertue of which it brought forth *leaves*, and was green and flourishing: being thus withered, Husbandmen use to appoint their Servants to gather them up and burn them.

1. He that hath made a profession to Religion, a purer way of worshipping God, and a stricter conversation before him, if he maketh a defection from it, he is *cast forth*. Cast forth by the Church, if that be in a calm and *Pacate State*, and not in such a crowd of disturbances from the world, that it cannot draw out its *spiritual Sword*, and let me tell you Christians, that is a dreadful thing, to be orderly excommunicated by a *Gospel Church*. The Apostle calls it a *delivering up to Satan*, the separation of the *Israelites* from the *Tents of Corah, Dathan and Abiram* was a forerunner of Gods dreadful Vengeance on them, the Churches separation from an apostatized Professor for his Apostacy, is not to be flighted. Provided this be done by a *true Church*, and for a *just cause* it is formidable enough, for other *Bruta fulmina*, they signifie little according to that of *Job*, *How forcible are right words, but your arguings what do they reprove?* But this is not alwayes, I told you, the Church is not alwayes in a condition, to execute this Vengeance upon Traitors. However

However they are *cast out by the Providence of God*. A notorious sinner may be *cast out* in the sight of God, when he is not so in *foro Ecclesæ* in the view of men: and there is no branch not *abiding in Christ*, but in this sense is *cast forth*. God casts him forth, he never had any true union with Christ, he shall now have any appealing relation, God will not own him, his Saints shall not be none of them - that God will *care for* with that *special care* which God extendeth to all those that are visible members of his visible Church, he hath made a defection from the City of God, and hath removed himself into the suburbs of Hell, he shall now have the priviledges of common Citizens. Thus men use to do. Tullius saith, it was never known, that those who made defection, and proved false to the City of Rome, *jura civium tenuerunt*, enjoyed the priviledges of Citizens. God will let it be seen, that those who are false to his City shall not retain the priviledges of the City of God.

Secondly, *As the branch casts out, with*  
*thereth*

hereth. So it ordinarily is with professors, they lose their *beauty* and *glory*, whether it lay in *their quick and excellent parts*, these oft times abate, their gifts dwindle, and come to nothing: or whether it lay in *the repute and credit they had in the Church of God*; they are lookt upon as *Fugitives* and *Renegadoes* by the sincerer professors of Religion. Nay, for the most part, this is not all, they lose also *their hopes for repute and credit with the world*. Who regard them as little as the Pharisee did Judas, when he had betrayed his Master. The wise God so ordereth it, that the world shall not trust those that his Church cannot trust. A fugitive from his Profession, sheweth too little of a Christian\* to be valued by the Church, and too little of a man to be much valued by the world, who ordinarily love the Treason, but hate the Traytor; they like it well enough, to see one professing to Christ spitting in his face, to hear him jeer and mock at the wayes of God in which he once walked, but in the mean time they hate the traytor; abhorring the levity

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and inconstancy of this weather-cock in Religion, that turns in obsequiousness to every wind. Thus he withers every way. *That which he hath is taken from him* : his gifts and parts , his credit and reputation , he becomes a man of no value to every one. But there is worse yet that follows.

Thirdly, ( Saith our Saviour ) *Men gather them, and they are cast into the fire and burned.* Thus men deal with the withered branches of Vines, once separated from the *Vine*. Thus will God do with Professors that *abide not in him*. They shall be gathered up in the great day of Judgement. Our Saviour tells us who shall gather them *the Angels*. They shall be burned with *unquenchable fire*. The Apostle saith *There remaineth nothing for them, but a certain dreadful looking for of fiery indignation*. Now our abiding in Christ, in the truths of Christ which we have formerly owned : in the wayes of Christ to which we have formerly professed, and in which we have formerly walked , is by our Saviour himself prescribed, as the only means to avoid this

Mat. 13.

Heb. 12.



this unspeakable evil otherwise hanging over our heads.

Thirdly, Our *abode with Christ*, is the excellent means to keep his presence with us. *Abide in me* (saith our Sa- Joh. 15 4. our ) and *I in you* : So John 14. 23.

*If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* What is this for Christ to abide with the soul? I answer, as it is one thing for a *soul to be in Christ*, another thing for a *soul to abide in Christ*. So it is one thing for *Christ to be in the soul*, another thing for *him to abide in the soul*. The abiding of Christ with a soul, I think implieth ;

1. *His manifestation of himself to the soul*; John 14. 21. *He that hath my in-commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self unto him.* The Lord may be in the soul, and yet be hid, so as the soul may go about trying, *Where is my God become ?* The soul may walk in the dark, and see no light. Christ is then said to abide in

the soul, when he appeareth to it, and that in some constancy, that he is not (to use the Prophets expression, Jer. 14. 8. ) *as a wayfaring man who tarrieth but for a night.* And,

2. *Gods sensible manifestations to a soul,* may be in the influences of *comforting, quickning, or strengthening Grace.* Take a soul under the greatest desertion, and cloud of Divine light, there is yet, as an *Union*, so some communion betwixt God and it, as the soul doth in some degree communicate itself unto God, under the greatest apostacy it can be guilty of ( if it truly belongs to him ) its backsliding is but gradual ) so God doth in some degrees communicate himself to the soul under the greatest desertion, the Union abiding, some communion is necessary. But now the Lords abiding with the soul, argueth more than this, it argues thus much, that the soul who thus abides in Christ, shall be under some *sensible influences of Divine Love*, and that not only for its consolation, cheering and refreshing it under dark issues of Providence, but for its  
strengthening

strength and liveliness in the way of God, it shall grow stronger and stronger, every day more fresh, and lively, and active in the wayes of God. Without this, how heavily doth a soul walk? crying out with David, Lord, *When wilt thou comfort me?* How hardly and heavily doth it come off with any spiritual duties? How weakly doth it perform them? When these locks are shaven off, in which its great strength lyes, it becometh as another soul. And this evinceth it, to be a great point of a Christians Wisdom to *abide in Christ*. You meet with a Promise in the Old Testament to this purpose. *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them; that I will not turn from them to do them good: but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall never depart from me.* Mark how God twists these both together: the same Covenant that ensures us Gods abode with us, to do us good: engageth us also not to depart from him. Thus far now I have evinced this as a piece of a Christians wisdom to *abide in Christ*; by considering it, as an *End*, 2. As a *Means*.

A Means in order to our keeping *Christs abode* with us. 2. In order to our *bringing forth fruit*, and *much fruit*. 3. In order to the preservation of our selves, from the greatest evils of being cast forth, *withering* and *burning*.

3. Let us consider it as a *condition* to which indeed all the Promises of the Gospel are annexed. You may observe all the promises annexed to a *continuance* in the words of Christ; to *overcoming*, to an *holding on to the end*; which expressions, and many more of like import, signify the same thing as *abiding in Christ*. It is a question amongst Divines, whether the *Covenant of Grace*, be *absolute* or *conditional*. If we understand by the *Covenant of Grace*, that *Eternal Paction* which was betwixt *God the Father*, and his *Eternal Son* (as the head of the Elect) it is no question absolute, and nothing is required of the Elect, in order to their Salvation, but what God in some other branch of that sacred Stipulation, hath engaged to do for them, give unto them, or work in them: but because in what we are to perform,

our

our own endeavour is required, and we are *workers together with God* ( to use the Apostles expression in another cause ) therefore in all *Exhibitions and Declarations of this Everlasting Covenant unto men* ( which were gradual, according to the different periods of the world , and as God was pleased more or less, darklier or more clearly to reveal his mysteries ) *it is propounded conditionally*: And this is the Condition annexed to all the great Promises of the Covenant, that we should *abide, hold fast, persevere, continue to the end, not draw back, &c.* I shall only particularize in one, and that is no mean one, *John 15. 7. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask of me what you will, and I will give it you.* For poor worms to have a liberty to go to God, to ask of him, to ask of him *what we will*; and this under an assurance from the only Son of God that we shall have it: Is it nothing to us? Seemeth it to you ( *Sirs* ) a small thing to have this liberty of access to the Throne of Grace? this is promised by him that cannot lye, and the condition annex-

ed, is your *abiding in him*. If you abide in me, you shall ask what you will. Certainly, I shall need say no more to evince this *Abiding in Christ*, the great concernment of Christians.

4. But once more, let us consider it as an *Evidence*. An Evidence of the truth of our *Union with him*. An Evidence to our selves: An Evidence unto others.

1. We can no other way evidence to our selves, that we ever had any true union with Christ, than by our abode and continuance with him. There is a real difference betwixt a seeming and a real and sincere Professor, but not discernable (other than to him that searcheth the heart and trieth the reins) any way but by a steady and constant abode in our profession. God hath said, if the righteous man forsake his righteousness and commit iniquity, his righteousness shall never be remembered. And again, If any one draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Whiles those, and such like Texts abide, this assertion must be true. The Apostle speaking of some that were gone out from the Church, sayes, They

were not of us ; if they had been of us, they had continued with us. That day a Christian steps back, he loseth all his hope, all his joy, peace, comfort & satisfaction.

2. *It is our only Evidence unto others.*

Put case a Christian hath a truth of Grace, and be really united to Christ, by an union which *sin* shall not dissolve, and this Christian apostatizeth from his profession ( though it shall not be totally and finally ) gradually. What ever he be, other Christians ( during his Apostacy before his return ) cannot judge him a Christian indeed, but must look upon him as a temporary Professor till they see him renewing himself, by repentance, for *De secretis non judicat Ecclesia*. The Church of God can judge only from what appeareth, and interpret his heart by the Comment which his actions make of it. The summ now of all is this. If a Christian be concerned, to keep the manifestative, and influential presence of Christ with him, to bring forth the fruit of holiness to the glory of God, and much fruit to maintain his communion with Christ, and his Church, his vigor,



vigor, credit and glory with the Church of God, to keep himself out of Hell fire, to maintain his unspeakable priviledge, of going to God, & asking of God what he pleaseth, with assurance of receiving from Christ what he asketh, if he be concerned to preserve unto himself, and to have, to give unto others an Evidence, that he hath not mockt God, & deceived men in his profession, & acted an odious disssembler, & counterfeit in Religion. It is then his wisdom and high concernment to abide in Christ. I added further, that it is his more especial concernment to look that he *abide in Christ in evil times*. Let me evince that a little, and it will appear to you, if you consider with me these things.

1. That in such times *it is most difficult to do it*. It is a known saying, *Difficilia quæ pulchra*; No brave thing is easie. It is an easie thing, when the *Jews prosper, to lay hold on the skirt of a Jew*, and say, *we will be called by thy name*, to swim with the stream alas, in such a day, there are bladders enough to hold us up from sinking; besides the force of the stream alone will do it, but an evil time is the time of trial.

Peter

Peter himself found it easier to abide with Christ, when all the world ran after him, than when all his Disciples forsook him and fled. Evil times ordinarily afford three disadvantages which make an abode in our profession more difficult to Professors.

1. The first is, *from the loosening the reins to wickedness.* There is this characteristic difference betwixt a good and evil time in a spiritual sense. In a good time, a man may be as good as he will, but he may not be as loose and profane as he will; he may pray and hear, and wait upon God in Ordinances, publicly and privately as much as he will: he may not drink, and swear, and be filthy, and reproach the holy name of God as much as he will; the Magistrate remembers his Office to be a terror to them that do evil; and will let him know that, to that end he beareth not the Sword in vain. In an evil time men may be as loose, and lewd, and profane as they will, but they may not be so pure, and holy, and religious as they will. They may drink, and swear, and meet to rebel, and dishonour God what they will,

will, but they may not be so holy; they may not pray and hear God's word, &c. as much as they will. And give me leave to tell you this is a very evil time when it is thus, that godliness and profession is almost the only crime. And through the naughtiness of our hearts, whose native bias stands to evil, this makes it very difficult to *abide with Christ*; to hold fast our profession at such a time, when we know that we may give the loose to our lusts without fear of danger from Earth. It is true the man that hath a true root of grace hates sin, and loves goodness from a more inward principle, but in regard of the corruption of our hearts, an outward hedge does well, and contributes much to keep the believers within their true compass.

2. A second thing which in some times makes it difficult, is the temptation of outward advantages; which sometimes usually afford Renegades in profession. When the Devil was got on the pinnacle, he sheweth Christ all the glory of the world, and promiseth him (more than he had to dispose of) which

less than all, if he would fall down and worship him. Infinite are the instances in history of the large proffers in times of backsliding have been made to Professors upon condition of Apostacy, though for the most part the performance hath (through Gods righteous judgement) been very slow. The Devil for the most part serving his servants of this nature, as the Popish Persecutors have used to serve their Protestants, first debauched them, then burnt them: or as *Amnon* served his Sister *Thamar*, first obtained their lust of them, then thrown them down stairs. But temptations from *profits, honours, credit, places*, are no light things, especially where they meet with hearts, whose peculiar lust is *ambition*, or *covetousness*, or any thing of that nature; and this is a second thing, which makes abiding with Christ at such a time difficult; especially for men, whose birth, breeding, acquired or natural parts and accomplishments are such as render them capable subjects for such things.

3. A third thing which creates the difficulty,

difficulty, is, *the temptations which sometimes afford on the other hand.* When the Devil had our Saviour on the pinnacle, he had not only the advantage of a prospect to give him a view of the world: but of a Precipice too, to threaten him with into a compliance. Evil times afford not only places of profit, and honour, applause and encouragement to tempt Christians to a drawing back: but also *Gaols and fetters, nicknames and reproaches, instruments of death and cruelty,* to fright Professors out of the good wayes of the Lord: and the best of Christians have so much sense in them, so much of carnal and slavish fear, as these prove no weak Engines oft times to debauch them. Now this difficulty of standing on ground at such a charge, lets us know we are concerned to look to our spirits at such a time especially, if it be considered connexively with what shall further add: for although difficulty, abstractly and barely considered, discourageth undertakers in any work: yet if the work be honourable and necessary, and of high advantage

it whetteth the spirits, instead of abating  
our courage.

2. Secondly therefore let us consider  
the honour and advantage we shall have by  
our abode with, and in Christ at such a  
time, and the danger and disadvantage of  
our forsaking him. It is a great honor to a  
Church, and to a particular Christian,  
to abide in Christ with an evil time. This  
was the honour of the Church of Per-  
thamus, Rev. 2. 13. *I know thy works,  
and where thou dwellest, even where Sa-  
tan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my  
name, and hast not denyed my faith, even  
in those dayes wherein Antipas was my  
faithful Martyr, who was slain amongst  
you where Satan dwelleth.* The com-  
mendation of this excellent Church is  
simplified here from two observable  
circumstances. 1. *They dwelt where Sa-  
tan's seat was, and yet they kept the  
faith, and held fast the name of Christ.*  
The Devil hath a fugitive being in  
most places, but in some places he hath  
his seat, where an uncontrolled pro-  
fane-ness, and debauchery aboundeth,  
as there's *Satan's Seat*. It is an hard thing  
to dwell near his Seat, and yet to hold  
fast

fast the name of Christ: but it is a great honour to a Christian, to dare to be strict, and holy, and walk with God under the eye and frown of the Devil. Secondly, *They were faithful in those days when Antipas was slain.* To abide in Christ when multitudes run after him, this is no great honour, but when the Devil is making havock amongst Christians, throwing some into Gaols, others into their graves, then to hold fast the *Lords name*, this is a great honour to Professors. You are those (said our Saviour in an emphatical praise of his Apostles) *who have abode with me in my temptations.* It is an honour to a Souldier to stand by his Captain, when the battel goeth against him, when some of his companions are fled, others are slain, and he is almost left alone. Such honour hath the child of God in such a case.

Nor is it meerly matter of honour but of real advantage too. Such one may be assured, *that the Lord will not be ashamed of him in the great and terrible day.* Observe the Text: it is at least implied in it; *Whosoever therefore shall* *asham*

Mar. 8.38.

Luk. 9.36.



ashamed of me, and of my words, in this  
 adulterous and sinful generation, of him  
 shall the Son of man be ashamed when he  
 cometh in the glory of his Father with his  
 holy Angels. When is the time, when  
 there is any fear of Professors, that they  
 should be ashamed of Christ, and of  
 his words? Is it in the Sun-shine of the  
 Gospel? No fear of that, profession  
 then crowns its friends, and is a re-  
 ward to its self. The fear is in an evil  
 time, when a man cannot own God  
 and his wayes, but he must be made  
 by-word, purchase to himself re-  
 proach and a nick-name, be pointed at  
 as he walks in the Street, when he can-  
 not depart from iniquity, but he be-  
 comes the scorn of fools, and makes  
 himself a prey; this is the proper time  
 when Professors are apt to be ashamed  
 of Christ and his words, and if they  
 have any thing to do with Christians,  
 it is secretly, *coming by night* ( as Nico-  
 demus to Christ ) But saith this Text,  
 if any be ashamed of me and my  
 words, of him *shall the Son of man be*  
*ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of*  
*his Father.* The contrary is implied  
 D also,

also, if there be any that an evil time cannot *make ashamed of Christ, and the wayes of Christ*, but he will dare to own them, in the face of the world, when most peevish and angry : that is the man, whom the Lord when he comes to judge the world will not be ashamed to own. Oh ! what an honour will this be to a poor worm, when all the world shall be gathered together before the Judgement Seat of the great God, and a poor creature shall stand amongst them, of whom it may be while he lived, his friends were ashamed, great persons durst not own him, if they met him, they were ashamed to speak to him, because he was lookt upon as a Puritane, and the Eternal Son of God at that day shall not be ashamed to own him as his Child, his Servant. Nay, honour is not all in the business : Our eternal happiness dependeth upon our Lords owning us, or being ashamed of us at that day. Christ will be ashamed of none at that day, to whom he will not say *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting burnings*. For Christ at that day not

be ashamed of us is the same thing as to give us the Kingdom which he hath prepared for them that love him. But yet a little further in demonstration of this, see that Text, *Luke 22. 28, 29.* *Luke 22. 28, 29.* *You are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. Christs temptations (there mentioned) were his trials, and abuses from men which he met with during his labour in the accomplishment of our Redemption.*

Christ hath his *temptations* still, not personally, but *mystically*; not in the body of his flesh, but *in his body which is the Church*. His precious members have yet the trial of *cruel scoffs and mockings*, of *scourges and imprisonments*. The Gospel is subjected to the same persecutions, to which the Lord of the Gospel subjected himself. Now some there are that abide with Christ *in his temptations*, whilst others turn their back, professing *they cannot burn*: What shall these men have? I appoint (saith our Saviour) *unto you a Kingdom*. A Kingdom! what reward is this? What will not vain

men venture, what will not they suffer that they may but usurp a Kingdom? When they have it, what have they more than a gilded Crown of real thorns upon their heads? But what is this Kingdom? not *earthly*, but *heavenly*; not a Kingdom for *care*, *trouble*, *solicitude* and *domination*, but for *pleasure*, *joy* and *happiness* unspeakable. Kingdom without a *care*, a Kingdom without an *enemy*, a State having all the sweetness, happiness and contentment of an earthly Principality. Nay, he adds, *As my Father hath appointed me.* The particle [ *as* ] may either refer to the Kingdom before spoken of, then it is *nota similitudinis*, *non equalitatis*; not a note of equality, but of similitude. Good abiding servants shall not have an equal degree of glory, but the same specific glory with Christ. Or else the particle may denote the *title* and *assurance*: *certainly* as the Father hath appointed me a Kingdom, and I shall have it, *certainly* shall you have your Kingdom. On the other side, not to abide with Christ and in Christ in an evil time, with

a matter of great dishonour, and highest disadvantage to us. It will be of great dishonour to us, both in this life, and at the great day of the Lord. In this life first, and that with all sorts of men. Constancy to principles and profession is a *virtue* which commends it self to the worst of men: for the contrary argues either a *want of judgment* in our first embracing principles, and undertaking profession; or a *levity of mind* and want of conscience, both which are high disparagements to our reputation and honour. For a man to engage in Religion, not understanding, or not having duly weighed the principles of it in the ballance of the Sanctuary, is no better than to erect an Athenian Altar, *To the unknown God*: if he hath weighed them, and approved them as *τὰ διαφέροντα*, the most excellent things, to desert them argues such a want of conscience, as fitteth none but those who make a cheap reckoning of eternity, and will sell their souls and highest concerns for a morsel of bread. Hence it is that an *Apostate* never is in credit with the men of the world, or that

faction in it to which he hath made  
 defection, who cannot but look upon  
 him as wanting either judgment or  
 conscience. Did he first engage in  
 course and practice of Religion, with-  
 out any enquiry into the principles of  
 it, or examining the truth of them?  
 What could be a greater levity or va-  
 nity? Did he understand the principles  
 and compare them with other pretend-  
 ed spiritual things, and judge these  
 which he hath walked the most rati-  
 onal, the most agreeable to the will of  
 God? Why hath he now rejected  
 them? why is he departed from them?  
 Is the will of God altered? Is the  
 Yea and Nay with him? Is the man  
 the same, the will of God the same, and  
 his judgment altered and practice  
 turned? What lightness is this? How  
 unworthy of a man, much more of a  
 Christian? God therefore calls after him  
 antient people the Jews, turned Renegades  
 from him, *Jer. 2. 10, 11. Pass over to the Isles of Chittim, and send unto  
 Kedar, and consider diligently, and see  
 there be such a thing. Hath a Nation  
 changed their gods, which yet are gods*

*Jer. 2. 10,  
 11.*

gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.

*Object.* Some will say to me, Is then every change of a Christians mind in the practice of Religion infamous or unlawful?

*Sol.* I answer, No. There is a Religion which men have *ex traduce*, a religious course which they have taken up meerly from the example or instinct of their parents, without any exercise of their own judgment, (and I am afraid this is the Religion of the most in the world :) They can give no other account why they worship God this or that way, but because this was the way their fore-fathers worshipped God, and they hope they are gone to heaven; and should they be wiser than their fathers? This was the Religion of the *Woman of Samaria* before she was converted, *Joh. 4. 20.* *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and you teach that in Jerusalem we ought to worship.* This is that which the Heathens generally said for their superstitious worships, and which they urged to Christians from time to time. There is no true reproach ariseth to any, from changing his pra-



Etice in Religion taken up upon this score: the reason is, because *every one ought to live by his own faith.* And God expecteth, that when we are arrived to years of discretion, that we can use our own reason, we should *Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.* Yet the world accounts this a reproach to a man.

2. There is another blind Religion which men may be engaged in, from *Tradition*, and the course of the Church wherein they have lived. The only account they can give why they thus or thus worship God, is, because this hath been the course of their Country, the custom of that Church in which they have been educated. God expecteth of us, that we should, especially in the great matters of our souls, not take up any thing upon trust. But in being certain, that God hath left an infallible rule in his Word, and given unto man a reason and judgment, he expecteth men should exercise it, and live (as I said before) by their own faith. For a blind *Papist* therefore, that hath been muffled in his Religion, and taught

to believe and do, as that which a pack of men, calling themselves the Church, hath taught him, having his own understanding awakened, and his reason manumised to use it, and judging that hitherto he hath worshipped God ignorantly, and contrary to what the rule directeth; to turn his feet into the way of Gods testimonies, is no real reproach.

Thirdly, Suppose a Christian hath undertaken a way and practice of Religion, upon enquiry into the will of God, conscientiously believing, and walking according to his own judgment upon the will of God revealed in Scriptures: The judgment of man growing by degrees to perfection, and not being infallible, it is not impossible but in some things he may alter his judgment and practice, upon the further illumination of his mind, and information of his judgment: and it may be no just cause of reproach to him. But then his alteration must be apparently for the better: that is, for such a course as is apparently more conformable to the Scripture, and the holy will

will of God revealed in them, and consequently is more pure, strict and holy. And if it be so amongst the men of the world, ( who will not understand this ) it will be a reproach to him. But where a man changeth for what is apparently a loose way of serving God, and which brings God less glory, and gives a greater liberty to the flesh: this is a reproach not to be wiped off. But the good and bad word of the world is not highly considerable, ( indeed only to those who make a defection to it ) *To bring a praise in the Churches of Christ*, is what is most truly valuable. How little can this can those expect who have not preached the Gospel, and the holy and right ways of God? Such men become the shame and grief of all those who were formerly their companions in the things of God.

But alas, what is the dishonour of this life, to the *shame* they will meet with at the great and terrible day, when, as I shewed you before, the Son of God, coming to judge the quick and the dead, with his glorious Angels, shall

be ashamed of them. Oh the dishonour of that day! How shall all Apostates, with those mentioned *Rev. 6.* at that day cry to the mountains to *fall upon them, and to the rocks to cover them*, that they may not see the face of that Christ, whom they deserted in the hour of temptation, whose ways and ordinances they forsook, because of the reproach and threats of men. But this is not all: That day will not only be a day of shame, but also of wrath, yea of *great wrath*. And certainly there's none will have a greater share in the dreadful wrath of that day, than those who have forsaken the right ways of the Lord. Degrees of wrath will be dispensed according to degrees of sinning. Now there are none who have to an higher degree dishonoured God, and made his name to be ill spoken of, than such as have apostatized from the ways of God. But this I have before hinted, I shall therefore adde no more to the confirmation of this point. I now come to the application of it, and that I shall bring under one general Head of *Exhortation*, which I shall divide into

two

two more general branches: 1. The first respecting, *Such as yet keep their station in the ways of God*, to confirm them, and engage them not to stir their ground. 2. The second respecting such as have made a *defection*, (if possible) to engage them to return.

**Exhort.**

**1. Br.**

In the first place give me leave to speak to you, my Brethren, who yet are in the ways of God, *what you were* to you let me repeat my Text, *And now, little children, abide in him.* It is reported concerning the blessed Apostle who was the Author of this Epistle that abiding at *Ephesus*, when he was very old, so as he could not go to the place where his Disciples met to worship God, but as he was carried, nor was able to speak much, he was wont at their several meetings one after another to say nothing but this, *Little children, love one another.* His Disciples at last tell him of it, and wondred that they never heard more from him than one sentence, and that so often repeated. He answers them, *It is the precept of the Lord, and if that alone be done it sufficeth.* If, my beloved friends, it were

**Hieron. in**  
**6 cap. ep.**  
**ad Gal.**

my

my case, and I could speak but seven words unto you in this evil time, these should be the words, *And now, little children, abide in Christ.* If you should ask me, why I so often inculcated those words, I would make you the same answer, *It is the precept of our Lord, and if this be done, it is enough.* I would not say unto you, *Abide in me*, or in my words; nor, *Abide in the words which the faithful servants of Christ have formerly taught you.* This may be your duty, but not because they taught it you; they were fallible men. *Search the Scriptures. Abide in Christ.* God forbid any Minister of Christ should require more of you. I would not say to you, *Abide in any principle you have learned, nor in any practice you have walked in.* This may be your duty, but not unless those principles and practices have been what our great Lord and Master hath required of you, *Abide in Christ, Hoc solum sufficit*, this alone is enough. But that you may understand the full scope of the Exhortation, I shall open it in three things, and so divide this Exhortation into three branches.

I. Abide

1. Br.

1. Abide in the faith of Christ : I mean, the fixed perswasion of the truth of Gospel propositions. Truths which Christ in his Gospel hath revealed to you.

2. Br.

2. Abide in your faith in Christ; where I shall not take faith strictly for adherence, but as comprehending that, and hope, and patience.

3. Br.

3. Abide in your obedience to Christ; walking in your uprightness in an exact obedience to his blessed will, both in matters of *Worship* and *Homage* towards God; and in matters of *Holiness*, *Justice*, *equity*, and *Mercy* towards men.

1. Br.

1. Abide in the faith of Christ, that is, in a firm and fixed perswasion of the truth of those propositions of truth, which Christ hath in his Gospel revealed. This is the least of a Christian, and that which distinguisheth him from a Jew, who believeth the *Old Testament* but not the *New*; and from a *Pagan*, who believeth neither. A man may go to hell who hath it, (for the devils also believe and tremble, they could say, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God*) but not



man can go to heaven without it. It is the foundation of justifying faith, it hath an influence upon all our practice. *How shall men call on him on whom they have not believed.* Therefore the Apostle speaking of some *Apostates*, joyns both these phrases together, *Having made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience.* Without reliance on Christ, none can be saved; who will trust and rely, and adhere to a Saviour, who doth not know him, or is not perswaded of him in his circumstances of sufficiency. Think not therefore light of this. The propositions of the Gospel are various, the Scriptures are as full of them as the Heavens are of Stars; but as one star differeth from another in glory, so it is with these *Propositions*. All are not of equal weight, glory, and influence. Divines have usually distinguished them into *Fundamentals*, and such as are no *Fundamentals*. But what are *Fundamentals* is not yet agreed, nor I think ever will. I shall not undertake to decide the controverſie. But in short, I think Propositions of truth may be called *Fundamental*, 1. *With reference*  
to

to others. So those truths are *Fundamental*, which are the bases and foundations of all others, from whence they flow by way of just consequence or inference.

2. With reference to our *salvation* and so those are *fundamental* upon which our salvation depends. And of these,

1. There are some that must be *explicitly known* and *assented to*, or we cannot be saved. I think truly the number of these is not great, though I durst not undertake to define them.

2. Others there are, of which we cannot say, that an explicit distinct knowledge of them is necessary to salvation, but some knowledge of them and assent to them is necessary, especially to persons living under the light of the Gospel. I shall not pretend to give you a strict account of all that fall under either notion, but some I shall more especially commend to you.

1. *That the holy Scriptures are the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and life.* This is the principle of Christian Religion, and the proof of

from Scripture is not to be expected. Take heed you fail not in this, yea, and take heed upon what argument you receive the Scripture as such. The *Soci-  
nian* will tell you there are arguments enough from reason, (but the greater is not blessed by the less.) The *Papists* will tell you, the *Tradition* of the Church is enough. If you take the *Scriptures* upon either of these evidences as sufficient, the devil hath a fair advantage to tell you, That both these are but humane testimonies, and humane testimony can beget but an humane faith, and if an humane faith be sufficient for the *Scriptures* in general, it is sufficient for every proposition of faith revealed in them. Our Saviour blessed *Peter* for believing *what flesh and blood revealed not to him*. The old Doctrine of Protestants was, *That nothing* but the impression of the *holy Spirit*, working by and with reason, and the self-evidence of those holy books, can be enough. Hold there, or you lose all. Do the *Papists* bid you, *Prove the Spirit you pretend to persuade to?* Bid them prove their Church, whose traditions they

E obtrude

obtrude upon you, and you are even with them. They must certainly prove it by the Scriptures, or not all; and so, I hope the Scriptures may as well be allowed to shine in their own light as in the light of the Church, which hath no light but what it must borrow from the Scriptures.

2. That the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, prophesied and prefigured of old, in the fulness of time, assumed our nature, and as God-Man died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, being our only Saviour, Mediator, and Intercessor; and he whom God hath appointed to judge the world. The Socinians or Unitarians (as they call themselves) deny the eternal existence of the Son of God, and so call you to believe in an insufficient Saviour, they deny his Merits, or the Satisfaction of them. The Papists tell you of other Mediators and Intercessors, (hence their invocation of Saints) they teach you to trust in your own merits, take heed of these, they shake the foundations. The Apostles call Christ, God over all, blessed for ever. It tells you, Rom. 4. 25. He was delivered

Rom. 9 5.

4. 25.

livered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. It tells you that there is but one Mediator between God and man, even Christ. That he liveth to make intercession for us, Heb. 9. That there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, neither is there salvation in any other. Let this be a second.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

Acts 4. 12.

3. That there is none righteous, no not one. No Infant. The Scripture tells you, Ephes. 2. 3. We are all by nature children of wrath. Psal. 51. 4. That our mother hath conceived us in sin. That by one mans disobedience many were made sinners. No grown person either legally righteous. 1 King. 8. 46. For there is none who liveth and sinneth not. Jam. 3. 2. Ja. 2. 10. Eccles. 7. 20. There is not a just man that liveth, and sinneth not. Nor yet Evangelically righteous from any righteousness of his own. But of this more by and by.

Rom. 3. 10. 5. 15, 17, 18, 19.

4. That the righteous Lord loveth righteousness. And without righteousness no man can stand before God, but will certainly be accursed to all eternity. The Psalmist tells you, The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. The Law is, Cursed be

Gal. 3. 10.

be that continueth not in every tittle of the Law to do it. The Gospel dispenseth not with that curse, it only allows of our Sureties fulfilling the Law for us, and our fulfilling of it in him, according to that of the Apostle, In him you are complete.

5. That there is no righteousness, where in any poor creature in the great day the Lord can stand before a righteous God but the alone righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, his active and passive obedience imputed and made over unto us. Nor is there any deliverance from wrath but by this righteousness of Christ imputed. This point is the very hinge of the Gospel, Luther called it, The Article of standing or falling Church; it is the Article of a standing or falling soul. Hold this, and you will not easily be seduced in other points. The Scripture tells you, There is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved. Neither is there salvation in any other. It is the whole business of St. Paul almost throughout the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galathians, to prove this. St. Paul desires to be found Christ

A. C. 4. 12.

Christ alone, not having his own righteousness which is of the Law, but the righteousness of God, the righteousness of faith. Hence Christ is called, The Lord our righteousness. And he is said to have been made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; And to be made of God for us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

6. That every soul thus justified is effectually called. He is not only (as many are called.) called out of the Pagan world to believe and receive the Doctrine of the Gospel, but by the Spirit of God powerfully joining with the Word, he is made to see and be sensible of his lost condition out of Christ, and enabled by a true and lively faith to receive, and lay hold upon, and trust in Christs righteousness, he is also regenerated, that is, made a new man, by a change wrought by Gods Spirit in his heart, affections, whole man. And without this none is justified, none can be saved. Joh.

3. 5. Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he can never enter into the Kingdom of God. Ro. 8. 13. If you live after the flesh, you shall die. Ro. 8. 1.



There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. If a man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And in many other Texts.

Let men talk what they please of *Baptismal Regeneration*, who so lives to years of discretion, and hath no more, shall never see the face of God. I know the most learned assertors of it conclude it of little value, *ponentibus obicem*, as they say, that is, if men after Baptism wilfully sin against God, (who lives and doth not?) So as that limitation makes their novel Doctrine but a security to baptized persons dying in infancy. They have a fancy to merit the name of *Blandi* instead of *Duripatres infantum*, (as *Augustine* was called). All that is to be feared of the imbibing in that new Doctrine is, lest people should be lulled asleep with that notion of being justified in Baptism, and think that afterward they run to all excess of riot, they need only to wash their feet, by a slighty repentance, and never look after a true sight of sin, or an actual believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. That Christs Righteousness is not imputed to any soul, without the exercise of faith, eying, receiving, resting upon Christ, and Christ alone for salvation. Nor can any true act of sanctification flow from any other principle. So as one who never in the sight of his sin and lost condition fled to Christ, and laid hold upon his righteousness, be he under what other circumstances of birth, breeding, Church-membership, moral righteousness, formal and constant performance of religious duties is in a state of damnation: and so dying perisheth for ever, John 3. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already: because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Ver. 36. He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: he that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. And again, Without faith it is impossible to please God.*

8. That regeneration and faith, and every other habit that is truly spiritual

cometh from the special distinguishing grace of God, and is wrought in the soul, by his alone power, and by him drawn out into exercise, and we have no power of our selves so much as to think one good thought.

- Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, John 3. 5. Born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God. Phil. 1. 29. It is given you on the behalf of Christ to believe. Faith is not of our selves, it is the gift of God. Eph. 2. 8. Ephes. 2. 8. Every good and perfect gift cometh from above, James 1. 17. Without me you can do nothing, John 15. We have no sufficiency of our selves to think one good thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Abide in this (Christians,) Christ doth not say, Without me you can do no great things, nor without me you can do little, but without me you can do just nothing.

9. That whosoever is thus justified and regenerated, sinneth often, but yet in some sense sinneth not: Not as others do, not making a trade, nor taking a pleasure in sinning, not with plenary acts, and consent of his will. He cannot be an habitual, constant Drunkard, Unclean person,

on, Swearer, Curser, Lyar, Blasphemer, Prophaner of Sabbaths, or the holy Name of God; he cannot live in a known course of cheating and de-rauding: but though he falls seven times a day, yet it is by sins of infirmity; and if he be overcome by temptations to greater sins, as Noah, Abram, Job, Peter, David, &c. yet he lyes not in them, but with Peter weeps bitterly.

10. That although a child of God may in many things be ignorant of his duty, and wherein he knows it, may sometimes want strength to perform it: and he who both most is not perfect: yet no true child of God will live in the wilful and constant omission of any known duty, nor in the wilful ignorance of any part of his duty; but striveth to grow in grace and knowledge: and for what he knoweth. To will is present with him, though he hath no strength to perform: and as to his inward man, he will delight in the Law of God: and though he be not perfect, yet he striveth after perfection, Phil. 3. 12. He followeth after, Phil. 3. 12. that he may apprehend that for which he is

is also apprehended of Jesus Christ, who counteth not himself to have apprehended. But doth this one thing, forgetting those things which are behind, and reacheth forth to those things that are before, and presseth toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.

11. That in order to this, he who would see the face of God, must make the Word of God his rule, both of faith and life. Believing no Divine Truth but upon the credit of the revelation of it in the Scriptures (indeed otherwise it can be no Divine faith) taking his Rule for his help from the Scriptures, both for the ends, and for the manner, and directing all the actions of his life, in his general calling, in his particular relation, according to the general and particular Rules of the Holy Word of God, not turning aside from them.

12. That as we shall all dye; there shall be a resurrection from the dead, and a day of Judgement. When Christ shall judge the quick and the dead, according to his Gospel. When the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the

Isa. 8. 20.

Mat. 15. 9.

Joh. 4. 23.

Deut. 12.

32.

Col. 2. 23.

Psal. 119.

109.

Rev. 21. 8.

derm

*Arers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters,*  
*and all lyars, all those that trouble the*  
*servants of God, that know not God, that*  
*obey not his Gospel; all thieves, covetous*  
*persons, drunkards, revilers, extortio-*  
*ners, &c. shall be adjudged to the Lake*  
*that burns with fire and brimstone, to*  
*have their portion in fire and brimstone,*  
*in everlasting burnings, with the Devil*  
*and his Angels.* On the contrary, Those  
*who by believing and obeying the truth,*  
*and by patient continuance in well doing,*  
*Evidence, That they are such whom*  
*God from Eternity hath chosen to life,*  
*on the behalf of whom, Christ made an*  
*Eternal Covenant with his Father: for*  
*whom he died: To whom he hath*  
*given his Spirit in a way of a special and*  
*distinguishing grace, shall have a joyfull*  
*resurrection, and hear that blessed sen-*  
*tence pronounced to them: Come you*  
*blessed of the Father, inherit the Kingdom*  
*prepared for you.* These are some of those  
 Gospel Propositions, which you have  
 been taught, *Abide in them.* Search  
 the Scriptures, see if they agree not  
 with them: if they do, take heed how  
 you change your persuasions as to them,  
 for

2 Thes. 1.  
 7, 8.  
 1 Cor. 6.  
 9, 10.

Rom. 2.

March. 25.

for any new systeme of Doctrines leading you to salvation: This faith will lead you unto holiness and strictness of life: It will not give you that liberty to the flesh, which other doth. It will make you live in the daily view of the truth. *Straight is the way, and narrow is the gate that leadeth to eternal life, and few there be that find it.* Which will remain true, when all the world shall be found liars. ~~I pass to the second branch of the Exhortation.~~

2. Br.

*Abide in your faith in Christ.* I shall not here take faith in so strict and abstract a notion, as it is sometimes taken in Scripture, but as it comprehendeth  
 1. *Adherence to, and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and him alone for salvation.* 2. *Hoping in him.* 3. *Patience waiting for him.* The two latter are the daughters of faith strictly taken, but they have so much of their Mother that in Scripture they are often taken for it, and called by her name.

1. *Abide in your stedfast adherence to, and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and him alone for salvation.* There are some



Some that despise salvation, some that neglect it, some that vainly seek it, some have no hope, some have no true foundation for their hope; Some never think of another life, so neither hope for it, nor despair of it, but live like Beasts in the world, crying, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die: and so call out their souls to no use of faith, or adherence to any thing at all in order to it. I hope I speak to such as believe they have souls, and that their souls are not given them merely *pro sale*, to keep their bodies from putrefaction, but that they are immortal beings, capable of, and ordained to an Eternal existence, which must be either in eternal life, or in eternal misery, and who live in the waking conviction of this, and so are concerned to think what they should trust to for eternal salvation: Some are thus far awakened, but like drowning men, lay hold on every twig and bulrush, never considering whether it will bear their weight or no. One man thinks, if he be *baptized*, he shall be saved. Another if he keeps his Church,

Isa. 64. 6.

Church, and payes every man his owne  
 he shall be saved. Another if he give  
 his goods to the poor, builds Churches  
 Hospitals. *This is all to say we have  
 our life in our hands. You have been  
 otherwise taught, viz. To do all that you  
 can in obedience to the commandments  
 God, and when you have done all, to say  
 you are unprofitable servants; to say that  
 is not my Righteousness. To say also  
 the Church; We are as an unclean thing  
 and all our righteousness as a filthy rag  
 to cry out, None but Christ, None but  
 Christ. Hold there Christians, live in  
 daily view of eternity, in a daily ex-  
 ercise of faith, adherence to, and reliance  
 upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is  
 whom alone you can be brought to  
 blessed Eternity. Let the Papist if he  
 will, trust to his own merits. Trust  
 you to the merits of Christ alone.  
 Their Learned Cardinal when he came  
 to dye, could cry out, *It is the safest  
 do so;**

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*Vide meliora proba;  
 Deteriora sequor.*

Let them if they will trust to the superlative merits of other Saints, it may be they were no *Saints*; if they were, they must be better supplied than the *Wise Virgins* if they have oil enough for themselves and you too: if they had, there is no way of conveyance to you ordained by God: but every man hath use enough of his own righteousness: and at the great day, it will be found, that those have been mistaken, who have dreamed, that any but Christ have had *any to spare*, or any that could be *imputed to another*. Trust in Jesus Christ, and in him alone.

2. *Abide in your lively hope.* In our hope of a glorious resurrection: In our hope of a day, when God shall judge the world by our Lord Jesus Christ: In our hope of eternal life. This very age will tell you, that if such as fear God, and strictly walk in his ways, Following the severer paths of Worship and holiness, had hope in this life only, they were indeed of all men most miserable. These are the worlds reproach, these almost are the only transgressors accounted;

counted; Drinking, Swearing, Blaspheming, Cursing, Uncleanneſs, theſe are but *venial* tolerable ſins: Cloſe walking with God, fearing to offend him in matters of Worſhip, praying, meeting together to faſt and pray: theſe are the Capital Offences, for which *Prifons*, are prepared. But Chriſtians, there will be a *Reſurrection of the body*; there will be a *day of Judgement*: There will be a *revelation of eternal life*. The bodies of Gods people may be abuſed, waſted in *Prifons*, and conſumed there, but they ſhall live again. Men now judge the world, it ſtands them in hand to conſider, whether they make *righteous Laws*, and decree *righteous judgement* upon them: For there is another day of Judgement appointed, when all *Laws* and *Acts of Judgement* upon them, will be examined again by the *Divine Law* and by the *Standard of Heaven* tryed. The iſſue will be then tryed, whether *Drunkards, Swearers, Curſers, Unclean Perſons*, ſuch as wallow in all manner of *filthineſs*; or ſuch as live according to the ſtrict rule of Gods World, and deſire no more than that they may quietly

etly live so, according to the just dictates and apprehensions of their own consciences, be *the troublers of Israel*, be the persons more or less approved and accepted of God: I say the issue will be tryed again upon appeal, at the tribunal of Christ. Live therefore in this hope, and let not the deferrings of your hope, make your heart sick. He that *shall come, will come, and shall not tarry*. The blessed Apostles sixteen hundred years since saw him preparing his Chariot, and making ready, and in the view of it endured *cruel mockings, scourgings, imprisonments, fiery tryals, the loss of all*, and counted *all but dung*, that they might in that day be found in him. Your salvation is nearer now, yea, it is *nearer than when you first believed*. Maintain this blessed, lively, glorious *hope*. Maintain it, and it will maintain you. It is a grace, will not be your debtor. Without it your heart will break under it, it cannot break. But remember, *Hope which is seen is no hope*: You may for ought I know endure many a cold night, in derisions, reproaches, &c. in Prisons, in  
F other

other Lands. Whiles you keep the *faith* and good conscience, which your Master hath given you in charge, before the dayes of your servitude be expired; yea, the long night of death may come, and your *flesh may rest in hope* some years. But still maintain your *hope*: *Rachel* will come at last, eternitie is coming. A joyful resurrection, a day of Judgement is coming, you have done your work, and are doing of it, serving **God** with faithfulness: others must do theirs too, in *filling up the measure of their iniquity*, persecuting him in his members, whose person they cannot reach (unless by their profane Oathes) God will judge both you and them according to your works. The men of this world it may be pierce your heart as with a sword, when they say, Where is your Christ become? Where is the Promise of his coming? It is now more than sixteen hundred years, and all things remain as they were. But you shall see him Christians: you shall see, and they shall see that Christ riding *in triumph*, with all his Angels, and ten thousands of his Saints, whom you have desired

desired to serve faithfully with your spirits, whose Kingdom you have desired to advance; and they shall see him, whose Name they have profaned, whose Gospel they have obstructed, whose Kingdom they have opposed, whose Ministers, whose Members and Servants they have abused, imprisoned. I say they shall see him, and endeavour to *hide themselves in Dens and Rocks of Mountains, and say to the Mountains, and to the Rocks fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to abide it. Abide in this hope.*

Revel. 6.  
15, 16.

3. *Abide in your patient waitings for God.* Adherence to Christ secureth the soul, it setteth it on the Rock that is higher than it, and secureth it as to Eternity: It puts the soul into a certain state of Salvation, and keeps it so. Hope keeps it alive, and full of vigour, and chearfulness, and strength in that state, so as it fainteth not under all the delayes of Providence. *Patience stayeth the soul, and maketh it to stand still*



and *wait* for Gods time; so that neither in its heart, nor in its actions it maketh hast, but having chosen its ground, and found it to be such as will bear a soul, and such as a soul ought to stand upon, it *standeth still*, without weariness or murmuring or discontent; and notwithstanding all the Artifices of the World, Flesh and Devil, all the volleys of shot that are made against it, all the discouragements that it hath, yet it *standeth*, and *waiteth still*, and will not stir from the ground which it hath chosen: but sayes, This way, this course I have chosen in expectation of an happy issue, I yet see it not, but yet here I will stand, here I will abide; here I will dye; if I *perish*, I *perish*. The blessed Apostle tells the *Hebrews*, Heb

He. 10. 36. 10. 36. *You have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God may inherit the promise.* There is a *passive* patience, which lyes in a quiet submission to, and a glorifying of God under the frowns of his Providence. Chri

Lu. 21. 19. *this. In your patience (saith our Saviour) possess your souls.* There is an *active*

active patience, which is the souls quiet waiting for the promise, while it goes on doing his will. It is opposed to a souls making haste. Of the Believer it is said, *He that believeth maketh not haste.* Christians, I know many of you have had patience: Abide in your patience, those that can wait on the Lord, without limiting the Holy One to the uncertainties of years and moneths, in the end shall not be ashamed. You cannot abide in Christ, if you cannot abide in patience: God will be waited for; Let patience therefore have its perfect work. Say not to your Lord, *Wilt thou at this or that time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* It is not for you to know times or seasons. It is an ill principle, that hath hitherto kept thee in the wayes of God if this be all, because by such a time thou expectedst sensible encouragements. What hast thou to do, but to perform thy duty, and to wait for the mercy, if thou hast hitherto thus or thus walked, because God required it of thee, and it was thy duty. The will of God is the same still, and consequently, thy engagement the same still. But I proceed

to the third thing by which I opened this branch of Exhortation.

3. *Abide in thy Obedience.* Faith, and patience, and hope are all parts of obedience: but I understand here by it, an ordering of thy conversation still in exactest conformity to the will of God. Duties of Obedience fall under a double head, as our conversation more immediately respecteth God or man.

1. Therefore, *Whatsoever acts, or ways of Worship, thou hast formerly performed, and walked in, in conscience to the command of God, those abide in.* Men alter, God changeth not. What was the rule of his Worship is so still, if thy foot formerly swerved from it, thou hast reason to reduce it, if not, take heed how thou forsakest it. The Lyons Den did not scare *Daniel* from praying to the God of Heaven as he was accustom'd. Acts of Worship are immediate homages to God, they are the souls approaches unto him. A Christian stands concerned, to be very curious and diligent as to them: I know nothing which formally distinguisheth true and false *Worship*, but the immedi-

ate command of God for the one, and the want of it for the other. Think it not a light matter how you worship God. If you any way fail as to the immediate, or mediate object; It is Idolatry ( of all sins the highest ) than which nothing so soon divorceth a soul from Christ, and therefore in Scripture it is compared to *whoredom*, the only just moral cause of a Divorce, and the highest offence in conjugal relation. *Babes keep your selves from Idols*, ( saith our blessed Apostle. ) If the failer be in the external mode, it is *Superstition*, or what the Apostle, Col. 2. 23. calls *Will-Worship*, no light transgression, *Who hath required it at your hands?* It is not enough for any to tell you the Acts of Worship are commanded, so were the Sacrifices which *Jeroboam* made *Israel to transgress by*. If the failer be in the inward manner of performance, then the sin is *hypocrisie*, take heed of all. Abide in the Acts of Worship which Christ hath prescribed, an Angel from Heaven cannot be allowed you to dictate any thing new as to them. *Abide in the manner of Worship*

for which you find a Divine Rule; no fear of transgressing in sticking close to the word there, I am sure the least swerving is not without its danger. When I speak of the manner of worshiping, I exclude from it such circumstances, as are necessary to Acts of Worship as they are humane acts without respect to Religion. These are variable by men according to circumstances of prudence, but for other Variations I understand them not. Do not only abide in your acts of more *publick Worship*, but of more *domestick and private Worship*. Be not ashamed to own the teaching of Christ to your Children and Servants to own praying in your families, to own publick and private Sanctification of the Sabbath, have you practised these things. O abide in them.

2. Abide in your *Obedience to God* in the just performance of your duties toward men. Abide in your holy and just, in your meek and humble conversation. Christ expounds our abiding in him, by our *continuing in his words*, and

*his words abiding in us, John 15. 7. Ho-* Joh. 15. 7.  
liness and godliness of conversation is  
never the worse for the discouragement  
it meets with in the world. *O abide*  
*in it* : No abiding in Christ without an  
abiding in universal holiness. Thus  
far I have opened the Exhortation :  
Shall I need add any Arguments to en-  
force it ? Surely, I have said enough,  
in the confirmation of the Proposition.  
But I shall summe that up here, and add  
a word or two.

1. *Do it with respect unto God.* It is the  
will of God concerning you : It is the  
way to glorifie God. I have spake to  
both these.

2. *Do it with reference to your selves.* That  
you may have the presence of Christ  
with you, *John 15. 4. Abide in me, and*  
*I in you. That you may preserve your*  
*union.* That you may bring forth fruit,  
and much fruit, *John 15. 4, 5.* That  
you may not be branches cut off, cast  
forth, withered, to be gathered up, for  
everlasting burnings. That you may  
evidence your selves to your selves, and  
to others also, to have had, and have a  
true and real union. That you may  
be

be entitled to all the *priviledges* of the Gospel, especial to this, *John 15. 7.* *They that ask what you will of God, and you shall receive it.* These I have opened, and more. That you may shew your selves to have that *constancy* which becometh men; That *fortitude* which becometh *Christians*, the want of which is the highest reproach, both in the world and in the Church of Christ. That Christ may not be ashamed of you, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, and with his holy Angels: But further yet, Consider your selves as you are in the Text represented, 1. As *children*. 2. As *little children*.

1. As *children*; that's a *relative term*, and the next question is, who is your Father? Our Saviour hath answered it when he bid his Disciples, *Call no man Father on Earth, for one was their Father in Heaven, Mat. 23. 9.* And again, when he taught his Disciples to pray, saying *Our Father*. Where should the child abide, but in his *Fathers will*, in his *Fathers love*, in his *Fathers house*: because you own God as your *Father*, therefore abide in him.



2. We are the children of the Apostles and Prophets, they are no fountains of being or good to us, but from them under Christ we derive our life: therefore the Apostle saith, *We are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*: and the Apostle tells the *Corinthians*, though they had many *Instructors*, yet not many *Fathers*. Look back upon those first and greatest Disciples, and see what they did, you shall not find an Apostate amongst them. Peter indeed in an extremity of temptation, for an hour was ashamed of his Master; but he *went out you know* and *weps bitterly*. Yet their temptations were greater than yours; you have not resisted to blood fighting against sin. You that are the children of so great Fathers; the followers of so great examples: Abide in him.

2. Consider your selves as little children. Little is a term of weakness and infirmity. It speaks you, 1. *Unable to subsist in your selves*. Take the Vine from the wall, it dieth; take the branch from the Vine, it much sooner dieth: You are little branches that cannot live in

in your own sap, cannot stand in your own strength. 2. *It speaketh you unable to resist any opposition. In the world (saith our Saviour, John 16.) you shall have trouble. That you may grapple with this opposition, that you may not fall in a day of trial, abide in him. In me (saith he) you shall have peace: be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* He it is that must be your peace, your strength, your support. When the *Assyrian comes into the Land*, when the *World, the Flesh, the Devil* all set themselves in utmost opposition to your souls. **This is the way for little children to be strong, and to quit themselves like men in the day of trouble. Abide therefore in him out of love to your selves.**

3. *Abide in him out of some respect to us, who have been the Ministers of Jesus Christ to you: I should not have instanced in this, had it not been before me in the Text, That when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed, before him at his coming.* God hath secured unto his faithful Servants in the work of the Gospel, their happiness under all the frowardness, rebellion

bellions and backslidings of the people committed to their charge. *If they* Ezek. 3. 18, 19.  
*give them warning*, they have delivered their own souls. *We are a sweet sa-* 2 Cor. 2. 16.  
*our to God, both as to those that are loved, and as to those that perish.* *Isaiah*  
*comforted himself in this, Though Israel* Isa. 49. 5.  
*be not gathered, yet I shall be glorified.*  
— *My judgement is with the Lord,*  
*and my work with my God.* This now  
would be enough to an hireling. Yea,  
the Lord knows far less than this satis-  
fieth many Ministers, such as are called  
so. They are not ashamed almost to  
speak it. Let us have but their Tythes,  
and let the Devil take their souls.  
Whether they speak it or no, their  
miserable starving some at nurse, others  
at their own dry breasts, their careles-  
sness to feed the flock of Christ, the  
stones which they give them instead of  
bread, the Scorpions they feed them  
with instead of fish, speak it plain  
enough. But this is not enough  
to a godly Minister. *My little chil-*  
*dren* (saith the Apostle) *with*  
*whom I travel in birth, till Christ*  
*be formed in you.* Paul laboured to  
present

present his people a pure and chaste  
*Virgin to Christ* : and saith that he con-  
 wish himself accursed, and separated from  
*Christ for his Brethrens sake.* The good  
 ly Minister is touched with a zeal for  
 the glory of God ; with a true concern  
 for the people of God committed to his  
 charge, and desires they might be re-  
 proved, though himself should be a  
 probate ; he blusheth, and is ashamed  
 for the hardness of heart, the Stub-  
 bornness, Rebellion, and Apostacy of his peo-  
 ple. How (saith he) shall I love  
 God in the face another day as to  
 soul ? He hath an ambition in the great  
 day to speak after his Lord and Mas-  
 ter. *Of all those whom thou hast given  
 me, I have lost none.* Now brethren  
*If you love them that love you (saith  
 our Saviour) what reward have you*  
 How inexcusable will you be, if you  
 love not them who love you. But if you  
 have any love for the Ministers of  
 Christ, who have spent themselves in  
 the service of your souls. If any kin-  
 ness for us, if you would be our joy  
 and crown, and glory ; not our trouble  
 and grief, and shame in the great day

when our Lord shall appear. *Abide in him.* Now abide in him, that you may have a Crown for your own heads, and help a Crown on to our heads; that when Christ shall appear you may have confidence, and not be ashamed to look the Captain of our salvation in the face, as all renegadoes will; and that we may have confidence, and come forth cheerfully when the Lord shall call us out in the day of judgment, and be able to say, *Lord, here are we, and those whom thou hast given us. Thine they were, trusted to us; and they have kept thy word.*

I will addé but one word more to this branch of Exhortation.

4. *Whether should you go?* This Peter considered, when our Saviour said to him, *Will ye also go away?* Lord, (saith he) *whether should we go? thou hast the words of everlasting life.* God complained of his people, Jer. 2. that they committed two horrible evils, *forsaking the fountain of living waters, and digging up to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that would hold no water.* This must be the case of every Christian, not abiding in Christ.

Christ. But to speak more distinctly.

1. *What faith will you embrace?* There's nothing so dissonant to the rational nature of man, than to believe a lie. Whatsoever pretends to a divine truth, and is not bottomed on Scripture, is no other.

2. *Where will you fix your hope and confidence?* Christ is the hope, and the alone hope of his people; whoso putteth hope or confidence in any thing else, trusteth to a bruised reed and a broken staff.

3. *To what course of life will you turn?* Will you again go back to the onion and garlick of Ægypt? Will you lick up your former vomit, and verifie the proverb, *The swine returns to the wallowing in the mire again?* Let me speak to you as the Apostle to the Romans, *What fruit had ye of those things of which ye have been ashamed?* Have you mourned for your former courses in vain? will you repent of your repentance? will you (because your Lord delayeth his coming) eat with the gluttons, and drink with the drunkards, and fall to smiting your fellow-servants? Take that of our Saviour

Saviour concerning such servants,  
 Matth. 24. 49, 50. The Lord of that ser- Matth. 24.  
 vant shall come in a day that he looketh 49, 50, 51.  
 not for him, and in an hour that he is not  
 aware of, and (verse 51.) shall cut him  
 off, and appoint him his portion with  
 hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnash-  
 ing of teeth. Once more, Whether will  
 you go? to what society will you ad-  
 here? Take the company of professors  
 with all their faults, they are the best  
 society in the world, I mean not the  
 best with reference to a Christians spi-  
 ritual nature and temper, but the best  
 in men. None more than they, none so  
 much as they live up to the principles  
 of humane nature and reason. The  
 drunkard, the unclean person, the covetous  
 worldling, the profane curser and swearer,  
 and blasphemer of the holy name of God,  
 the unjust man that defrauds and cheat-  
 eth his neighbour, the fawning flatterer,  
 the godless atheist, are so far from living  
 like Christians, that they live not like  
 men. Leave the flocks of Christs com-  
 panions, of the stricter sort of profes-  
 sors, and find an assembly (if you can)  
 not full of these spots, there may be a  
 G severe



severe Cato, a just Aristides, a composed Seneca amongst them : but Oh ! how rare are they ! Would you be glad, Sirs, to stand amongst these at the day of judgment ? would you be willing to have your portion with them ? If you would not, *let not your soul enter into their secrets, to their assemblies let not your honour be united.* But enough is spoken to this first Branch of Exhortation to them who through mercy yet do *their first works.*

2. Exhor. I shall finish this discourse with one branch of Exhortation more, *To those that have not abode in Christ,* pleading with them that *they would return.* Here let me first shew you the persons to whom I speak. Then I shall plead my Masters cause with them with a few arguments. In the opening the point I shewed you that men and women may have a three-fold state in Christ.

1. The first *Sacramental*, having been listed in the Lords Army, given up their names unto him, the Apostle saith, *we are baptized into Christ.*

2. The second *Professional*, as members of the Church which is his body, having

having walked with some Church of Christ in the Ordinances of the Gospel, and made an outward shew of living within the Gospel compass.

3. The third *real*, and more *inward* and *spiritual*, as having been by the grace of God the distinguishing grace of God, taken out of the *wild Olive* of a natural estate and condition, and ingrafted into Christ, who is the true *Olive*, and made true partakers of his grace. From the first and second state there may be a total and final apostasie; from the last, a sad and gradual apostasie; but neither *total* nor *final*.

First then, so many as have been baptized into Christ, and since their baptism have lived in the service of the world, of sinful lusts and pleasures, instead of the service of God: I say, so many have not abode in Christ. Oh! that they would remember the Covenant of their youth, that by the smart punishments which they see earthly Princes inflicting on them, that take their Oaths of Allegiance, and then turn Traitors; that take their press-mony, and then refuse to fight for them, nay, instead of it

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openly

openly fight against them: they would collect what dreadful vengeance they must expect, who in Baptism have engaged themselves to Christ, and (as it were) taken an Oath of Allegiance to him, and after this are found so far from serving Christ, that they are in the thickest of his enemies. Is there such a thing as treason and rebellion against earthly Powers and Princes, and is there none against the God of heaven? Shall an earthly Prince be judged just in tormenting to death a traitor to his Crown and Dignity, and shall not the *Lord of Lords*, and the *Ruler of Princes* be judged just in taking exemplary vengeance upon those that are traitors to his Majesty? Is it an odious thing to be a traitor to a man, and is there no odiousness in being traitors to the glorious God? Every person that hath been *baptized* into Christ, and after this lives in *drunkenness, uncleanness, profane and open sinning*, defying God and his Word, is such a traitor. Do these men abide in Christ, these that do not abide so much as in moral virtue? these that have not yet attained

attained to the perfections of a good Heathen? Oh remember your *vows*, (Christians) remember your *baptismal vows* to the great God, remember his Name into which you were baptized; Were you baptized into the name of the devil, or into the name of the world, or were you baptized into Christ? You that abhor the names of traitors and rebels to your Prince, abhor also the name and thing of treason and rebellion to the glorious Son of God.

Secondly, *So many as have made a more explicit profession of Religion*, not only entering their names into Christs *Master-roll*, (as every baptized person doth) but who have shewed themselves in his *Artillery-ground*, worn his colours, actually put themselves under the conduct of his Officers in his Church, and walked with the Church of God; and after this have gone out from them, not to another company whose profession was more strict and exact, but to associate themselves with the children of the world, for whose necks the yoke of Christ is too strait. These are some of those who do not

*abide in him.* And is there any time that doth not afford either a *Demon* that forsakes the ways of God to embrace the present world; or some *Diotrephes*, that loves the preheminance. Some or other, who either from impatience of dishonour and reproach, or a desire of honour, places of trust, repute, &c. or fear of a prison and danger, or out of a principle of covetousness for a piece of bread, or for the gaining of a great estate, will not desert the holy and right ways of God.

Thirdly, *Such as have indeed tasted the distinguishing goodness of God, having not yet perfectly put off the old man, but labouring under a body of death, may by the law of their members be brought into some captivity to the law of sin for a time.* 'Tis true, their union with Christ abideth indissoluble, but in an hour of temptation they may (possibly) fall away, not *totally*, not *finally*, but foully abating of their communion with God waxing cold in their love and zeal for the glory of God. Now to all these I would direct the close of my discourse speaking

speaking to them in the language of the Prophet, *Jer. 3. 13. Turn unto me, you back-sliding children, saith the Lord. Turn, turn, why will you die, O you sons of men!* I shall mostly for arguments (to enforce this Exhortation) confine my self to that excellent Prophet, in the second and third chapters of his Prophecy, to which I shall desire you to turn your eyes.

1. Consider in the first place, *What God hath done for you.* Thus the Lord impleaded the Israelites, *Jer. 2. 31. give me leave to alter the words a little, Was the Lord ever unto you a wilderness, or a land of darkness? Is it not he that hath made you? that hath preserved you ever since you hung upon your mothers breasts? Hath he not sent his Son to die the accursed death of the cross for you? Is it nothing to you that he hath admitted you to be baptized into his Name? to live within the pale of his Church, under the constant droppings of the fountain of life? Hath not he for some of your souls done greater things, in plucking you as brands out of hell fire? in making a*

particular application of the blood of Christ to your souls? And can you forsake such a God as this? Hath not he who died upon the Cross for you deserved so much at your hands, as to *match with him in one hour of temptation?* Have you thus requited the Rock of your salvation, O you unthankful souls? Are you afraid of a nick-name or a prison for him, who was not afraid of a Cross for you?

Hath the Lord brought you under the light of his Gospel, shewing you the right way of the Lord, when the *Pagan* world, where are ten thousands under more valuable circumstances (as to humane estimation) than you, lie in darkness, worshipping devils and stocks instead of God? Nay, hath he brought you into the purest light, to live in the Reformed Church, when a great part of the Christian world lies in the darkness of Popish idolatry and superstition? Yet further, Hath the Lord illuminated any of you with the common light (at least) of his Spirit, so as

Heb. 6. 5, you have tasted of the heavenly gift, and  
6. been made partakers of the holy Ghost,



and have tasted the good word of God,  
and the powers of the world to come?  
And after this are you gone away?  
What will you answer the God of  
your mercies another day? But yet  
further. If any have tasted the distin-  
guishing grace of God, and been made  
partakers of his saving grace, which is  
communicated but to one of a City, or  
two of a Tribe, to a few, a very few, if  
you should abate in your strictness, if  
you should not abide in the closest  
communion with the Lord Christ;  
How will you ever behold the face of  
Christ with confidence? O let the re-  
flection upon the former kindness of  
God to you prevail with you, to repent  
and do your first works.

Secondly, *What iniquity have you  
found in God, that you could not abide  
in him?* This argument the Prophet  
useth to back-sliding Israel, in Jer. 2. 5.  
I here make an appeal to the consci-  
ences of those who have formerly walk-  
ed with the Saints of God in visible  
communion, and themselves made a  
profession of those ways, from which  
they have turned aside, and which, it  
may

AAs 24. 5.

may be, they now persecute. *What iniquity did ever you find in the ways of God?* I know what the world saith of the courses of pure Religion, and of the professors of it. *Tertullus* (the Roman Lawyer) charged *Paul* with being a mover of sedition, a pestilent fellow, that profaned the Temple. The men of the world speak the same language still. But I appeal to you, did you ever find any such thing in the principles or practice of severer piety, and pure communion with God? This, the thing makes my heart to tremble in many professors, who are turned out of the right ways of God. The clamours of an ill-tongu'd world are so loud that I am so charitable as to many, to believe, that in the midst of their rage they are thus far justifiable, believing that they ought to do many things against those whom they hear so reported of. These are nearer pardon than the Apostate is. He has known the way of righteousness, he has walked in it, his conscience tells him that those whom he thus deserteth and possibly persecuteth, are more right

ious than he; that they are such as desire nothing but herein to exercise himself to keep a good conscience void of offence both towards God and towards men. That there is nothing to be found against them, but in the matters of God. That their ways are more holy, more righteous, than the ways of others: and that nothing but the lust of his own heart hath enticed him out of them, or can intice any from them, who hath any thing of the reason of a man, or Religion of a Christian, yet he abideth not in them, but embraceth a present world in defiance of his known duty. What shall the end of this man be?

3. Consider how tenacious others are of their sinful and vain courses. Jer. 2. 10, 11. Pass you over (saith God by the Prophet) the Isles of Chittim, and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Give me leave to allude to it. Pass ye over to the Mahometans, whose Idol is a  
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fordid person, whose course and form  
 of Religion is a bundle of nonsense and  
 blasphemy; yet will not they forsake  
 their profession. Send to the blind *P*  
*p*ists, who have nothing to say for their  
 superstitions but, *They believe as the*  
*Church believeth*; yet how rarely is one  
 of them proselyted? Look up among  
 the blinder sort of Protestants, who  
 have got some forms of Religion, but  
 they can neither give themselves nor  
 others a rational account of what they  
 believe or practise, yet how true is the  
 generality of them to their blind devo-  
 tion? Shall the knowing Protestant  
 only be the reed which every wind  
 will shake? Did not the very founda-  
 tion of your Religion allow you the  
 judgment of discretion, a liberty to pro-  
 ceed in *all things*, requiring you only to hold  
 fast that which was good? Were you like  
 others forced into your practice, or did  
 you upon deliberation, and weighing  
 of principles and practices, chuse the  
 way wherein you chose to walk, as that  
 which was most conformable to the  
 will of God? Have you a better evi-  
 dence for the contrary now? *Bring*  
*forth*

With your strong arguments. Have you  
one but what is drawn from your  
patience of suffering, your ambition,  
your covetousness of filthy lucre, &c? See  
amongst the Heathen there be such  
thing to be found. Oh, let it not be  
that those who worship they know  
of what, are yet more sure to their  
possession, than you who know what  
you do, and that salvation is in that  
wherein you have walked.

Fourthly, Consider what it is that you  
have done. The Prophet tells you,  
Jer. 2. 13. *You forsake the fountain of  
living waters, and dig up to your selves  
broken cisterns that will hold no water.*  
God is the Fountain of living waters,  
the creatures are cisterns that will  
hold no water. The pure Ordinances  
God are fountains of living water.  
God is the Spring, Ordinances are the  
fountains, which this Spring filleth.  
The waters are the Graces of Gods  
Spirit, communicated to the souls of  
his people in and by his Ordinances.  
The Ordinances are the wells of sal-  
vation, out of which our souls draw  
the water of life. If these wells be kept  
pure,

pure, the souls of Gods people are refreshed by them, and grow fat in the use of them; *Going on from strength to strength, till they appear before God at Sion.* If they be corrupted, according to the tincture they have received, they are more or less dangerous. There is a fountain, you know, that is kept clear, how pleasant, how wholesome are the streams of it? There are fountains in which men have thrown mire and dirt, how unwholesome are their waters, how unpleasant are they to the eye, how unfavoury to the taste? Have you forsaken God to embrace the world in the credit, honours, profits of it? You have forsaken *the fountain of living waters.* (He must needs be so, who is *the fountain of all good*, he in whom we live, move, and have our being) *have digged up to your selves cisterns, broken cisterns that will hold no water.* You will find it so when ever the providence of God brings you to be a-thought, if ever your conscience akes, if ever you have a thought rise up in arms against you, if ever you come to be within view of the grave, (and that you

Do one day ) if ever you come to have a prospect of hell, you will find all the creature but a cistern, a broken cistern that will hold no water. I have heard of an Emperour brought to that distress, that he cried out, *A Kingdom for a cup of water.* O take heed that you be not another day heard crying out, I will give all my credit, all my honours, all my places of trust and profit, for an hours peace of conscience, for one smile from my angry God, for one drop of water to cool my tongue. You have forsaken the *pure Ordinances of God* for the inventions of men; you have forsaken the *fountain of living waters*, you have digged up cisterns that will hold no water. Here's the name of the means of grace, but where's the thing? What presence of God do you find in them? What strength do you derive from them? What sweetness do you taste in them? Where's your former spiritual joy, peace, satisfaction? Is it not an Image in your bed instead of an Husband, a dream in your soul, from which when you rise up you are still an hungry, in stead of a feast for fat things?

Fifthly,



Fifthly, O that you would consider how it hath been with your souls since you made your defection. To this God calleth his back-sliding people, *Jer. 2. 14, 15, 16, 17.* Is Israel a servant? Is he a home-born slave? Why is he spoiled? The young Lions roared upon him, and yelled; they laid his land waste; his cities were burnt without an inhabitant. Also the children of Noph and Tahapanes have broken thy head. Hast thou not procured this unto thy self, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God when he led thee by thee way? It may be worth the reflection for you to consider, how God hath dealt with you, as to what you have most proposed to your self; whether mean, the getting of the world, whether in the profits, or honours, or credit and reputation of it. If the backslider gets not this, he gets nothing; and let me tell you, it is not ordinary in the providence of God to suffer him that is so far to prosper. Hath God since that time blest you in your estate, in your children, in your trade, &c? Or hath he blasted you? If the latter, Have you not procured this unto your selves, in that ye have forsaken

forfaken the Lord your God when he led you by the way. But it may be you cannot yet fee divine vengeance thus purfuing you, there is a time when *pœnalis nutritur impunitas*, God fatteth up fome with the Maift of the world to the great day of fllaughter, (though ordinarily thefe be fuch as never made any profeflion: *Judas* that had been a Difciple, quickly disgorged his thirty pieces, you know) That which I would have you principally enquire, is, how it hath been with your inward man, as to your fpiritual concerns. *St. John* in his Epiftle to his Hoft *Gaius*, wifheth above all things, that he might prosper, and be in health, even as his foul prospereth. If there fhould be a *Doeg*, that hath got any thing by his treachery to Chrift, and the intereft of his Gofpel; I would beg of him to confider, whether his foul alfo prospereth, and be in health as his outward man is. You have pretended formerly to know what belongs to an inward ferenity of mind, to peace of confcience, &c. Have you at any time fince your change found leifure to fpeak to your own fouls, and fay, *Is it peace?*

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If you have not, you have been very careless of Eternity; If you have, what hath it answered? Have you gone to bed with as much satisfaction in your spirit, after a day spent at a play, or a profane meeting, as you did heretofore after a day spent in a religious meeting, or at a fast? Have you had no more melancholick thoughts, no more sad reflections, no more terrours than before? Hath not the *evil spirit* sometimes so troubled you, that you have been forced to send for a *Minstrel* to play it off? Have not the images of those righteous servants of God, whom you have been reviling, whom you have been accusers of, and instruments to hale into prisons, ruine, and as much as in you lay to make an end of, sometimes appeared to you in your dreams, and disquieted you in your sleep? Have you not heard, though not a voice from heaven, (God will not so much honour you, who have so much spit in his face) yet a voice from your own conscience, *Soul, soul, why persecutest thou Christ?* What evil hast thou formerly seen in that way wherein

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thy self did walk worthy of this death, or these barbarous bonds? Do you see what servants, what home-born slaves you have made your selves? How the children of *Noph* and *Tahapanes* have broken your head? O return into the right wayes of the Lord, return to your first Husband, speak sincerely, *Was it not then every way better with you than now?*

6. Consider seriously with your selves, if a day of trouble should come, ( as certainly thou art not the only person exempted from the incumbrances and accidents to which mortality is exposed and subjected ) *would any of those things or persons help you, to which you are turned, and whom you have gratified in your departing from the right ways of God.* The Professor not abiding in Christ, usually makes choice : 1. Of *New Principles*: 2. *New Practices* in his conversation : 3. *New Friends*, and a *New Society*.

1. *New Principles*; he must have a seared conscience, that upon strict Principles, can build a loose practice, and retain the truths of God in unrighteousness. Therefore the Backslider hath ordinarily an *Almanack* faith,

calculated for the *Meridian* of his present practice. For example, it was the old faith of Professors, that all men and Women are by nature *children of wrath*, *Ephes. 2. 3.* That they remain in this state of wrath, till by the hearing of the word ( the holy Spirit working with it ) faith be wrought in them, and they be brought to *Receive the Lord Jesus Christ*, and to *believe in him*, *John 3. 18. 36.* Till they be *regenerated, and born again by the Spirit of God*, *John 3. 3, 5.* that is, till old things be passed away, and all things become new with them, for *he that is in Christ is a new creature.* That true faith where ever it is, *purifieth the heart, worketh by love*, to God, to his people; in a strict, universal obedience to all the commandments of God. As to which, they must have a *presence to will*, though they may ( in many things ) want *strength to perform.* That who so thus believeth, and is thus regenerated, is justified by the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and being justified, *sinneth not*, wilfully and *presumptuously*, or doth not lye and abide

in sin; but though he sometimes fall'eth by sin, yet he by and by purifieth himself, and riseth again by repentance. And it is the business of his life in all things, to make the word of God a light to his feet, and a lanthorn to his paths. Thou hast possibly collected another system of practical principles. That every one who is baptized is justified and regenerated. That to believe, is nothing else, but to be perswaded of the truth of the Scriptures. That indeed a man may fall away from his justified estate in Baptism, by actual sins, but a slight acknowledgement of his sins, in a formal confession, or when he comes to dye, will make up all again. And if a man lives in Obedience to what he calls the Church, making the dictates of men the rule of his practice, without any particular enquiry whether they be according to the Scriptures or no, he shall not need fear salvation. I confess this sheweth an easie way to Heaven, if it were as sure. But suppose a day of trouble now to thy soul; suppose now thy conscience awakened, either whiles thou art in thy full career, in thy prosperity, or

*A Word in season.*

when thou comest to dye, and some such Texts as these fall into thy thoughts at that day, *John 3. 18.* He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not, is condemned already; because he hath not believed on the Name of the only begotten Son of God. *Rom. 8. 1.* There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, v. 5. They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; they that live after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit. ver. 6. To be carnally minded is death. ver. 8. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. ver. 13. If you live after the flesh you shall dye. Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. Suppose these, or other such like Scriptures, should stick fast to thy thoughts in an evil day, what should relieve thee? Will it relieve thee when thou comest to dye, to remember thou wer't baptized in thy infancy? Will not thy thoughts reflect: There are thousands that were baptized will be damned. *Simon Magus* was baptized, yet



the gall of bitterness and in the bands of iniquity. *Judas* in all probability was baptized, yet a Son of perdition? Will it relieve thee to think thou hast believed the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and Christ to be the Son of God, so do the Devils believe and tremble? Will it relieve thee to think that thou hast been *obedient* to the orders of the Church? Dost thou not see, that those are most universal in that Obedience which is so called, whose lives proclaim the greatest opposition to the plain letter of Scripture in almost all the moral precepts of it? Shall they also have peace?

2. For *thy new Practices*. Heretofore thou wer't wont to pray in thy family, and to instruct them in the things of God; to spend thy time in reading the holy Scripture, to spend dayes in fasting, prayer, communion with the Saints of God; (Believing thy obligation from a moral Precept, to keep the Lords Day holy) thou wer't wont in it to exercise thy self in reading the word, hearing of it, in prayer, instructing thy children. Now thou hast forgotten thy family duties, thy cham-

ber practice in Religion, thy religious care of thy children and servants, and all thy Devotion is turned into a little Formality, of which thou makest no great conscience neither; Thy Sabbaths are spent in vain and idle discourses, and in a vain conversation; and if any acts of devotion still continue, possibly they are such as to which God will say to thee, Who hath required these things at your hands? Where did I ever speak a word to you or your Fathers of such homage to be performed to me, nor did it ever come into my heart. The time on other dayes which thou wer't wont to spend in fasting, is now spent in feasting; what was wont to be spared for hearing Sermons, is now spent in hearing Playes! Hark my friend, shalt thou not one day thinkest thou be sick unto death (as *Hezekiah* was *Isa. 38. 1.*) will the Providence of God thinkest thou never speak to thee, saying, *Set thy house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live.* Wilt thou upon these practices be able to say, as *Hezekiah*, ver. 3. *Remember now O Lord I beseech thee, how I*

have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in thy sight. Doth thy conscience tell thee these things are good in the sight of the Lord. Such an absurd verdict may possibly be given by the conscience of one muffled up in ignorance, but thou hast known, thou hast proved better things, thy conscience must tell thee, the courses which I formerly took, were better than these. Thou after thou hast escaped *2 Pet. 2. 20.* the pollution of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, art again entangled therein and overcome. Thy latter end is worse than thy beginning: It had been better for you never to have known the way of righteousness, then having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto you.

3. For thy new Company. Thou heretofore wer't a companion to those that feared the Lord. The Excellent on the Earth were those in whom thou didst delight, or at least, pretend to do so. Ministers of the Gospel, who had (beside their habit) something else to approve them such, powerful, constant Preachers

Preachers of the word, that knew how to speak a word in season to the weary, how to satisfy a doubt, resolve case of conscience, give to every one their portion, &c. People who made a conscience of their wayes; and though they had possibly their errors and failings, yet they were not such, as the very light of nature and reason shewed abominable, such as cursing and swearing, blaspheming the God whom they served, reviling persons and things, that had ought of his Image and Superscription upon them: Thou art now become a companion of fools, such I mean as the Scripture calls Idle, leud, profane persons, Sons of Belial, that live without any yoke, either of Scripture, or Moral Principles: thou eatest with the Glutton, and fittest with the Drunkard, and thy Chair is set for them who sit in the seat of the scornful, and whiles they are smiting thy own fellow servants, if thy hand be not against them, yet thy heart is; if thou throwest no stones at the Lord's Supper, yet thou holdest the cloaths of them that do it. Will thy day of visitation

ation (thinkest thou) never come?  
Send in that day for those that have  
sat at the Tavern with thee, and see  
if they be able to speak a word to thy  
soul weary of life. Remember *Saul*  
who had rejected *Samuel* enough, when  
he was in distress, he goes to a Witch,  
and who must she raise up but *Samu-*  
*el*? What satisfaction wilt thou have  
in an evil day, in a dying day, from  
those whom living thou hast preferred  
to be thy companions, before such as  
have feared the Lord. I shall shut up  
this Head with minding you, that by  
this Argument, God by his Prophet  
*Jeremiah* endeavoured to reduce  
backsliding *Israel*, *Jeremiah* 2. 28. *Jer. 2. 28.*  
But where are thy gods that thou  
hast made thee? Let them arise if  
they can save thee in the day of trouble.  
I will only add one thing for thy ter-  
ror. It is like enough that in the day  
of trouble, God may leave thee to fetch  
thy relief from these empty cisterns.  
When *Judas's* conscience smote him,  
God left him to his Masters the *Scribes*  
and *Pharisees* alone to comfort him,  
how cold a cup of consolation they  
af-

afforded him, the Gospel tells you. When the Jews had apostatized, and the Philistines and Ammonites opposed them, and they cryed unto the Lord they met with a rough answer.

Jude 10.

11, 12, 13,

14.

— ver. 13. *I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the Gods whom you have chosen, and let them deliver you in the day of your tribulation.* Take heed that the Providence of God speaks not that language to your souls in the day of their tribulation. Go and fetch their comfort from the principles, practices and company which you have chosen.

7. I will add but one Argument more. *That shall be from the mercy of God which he hath for backsliding children, making timely returns unto him.* This is an Argument which the Prophet Jeremy largely insisted upon, Chap. 3. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 22. First, He sheweth them, that this is above the mercy of men. *If a man putteth away his Wife, shall he take her again? &c.* It is very observable, that the Jews defection chiefly insisted upon by the Prophet, was in *matters of Divine Worship*, where the sin charged upon them,

them, was the highest in *genre suo*, idolatry, which is a failer in the object of Worship, either more immediate, or mediate: and therefore exprest in Scripture by the sin of *whoredom* (which is the highest error in conjugal relations.) There's no sin so separates a people or person from God as this sin. *Superstition* which is failer in the more external manner and rites of *Worship*, is a great sin, but something lower than this. Now God comparing the case betwixt him and them, to the case betwixt a Man and his Wife, that had dealt falsely with him, tells him, that in case of a divorce, a man doth not use to be reconciled to his Wife: yet Jerem 3. 1. *Return again unto me* (saith the Lord) ver. 5. *Will he reserve his anger for ever? Will he keep it to the end?* Again, v. 12. *Go and proclaim these words to the North, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall on you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy* ~~eyes,~~



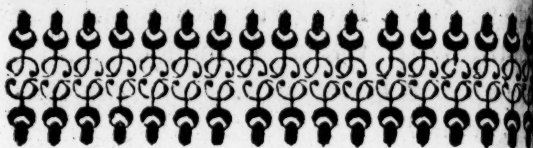
*ways to strangers, under every green tree, and you have not obeyed my Voice, saith the Lord, Turn O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you, saith the Lord, I will take you, one of a City, and two of a Tribe, and bring you to Zion. Again, ver. 22. Return you backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding. Oh that I could hear you saying as the next words of that Text; Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of Mountains, truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. In vain is salvation hoped for, from counsel of profaneness, formality, or superstition, or from any righteousness of your own. In vain is peace of conscience, in vain is any good thing hoped for from them; in vain is any blessing of God in this life hoped for from them. In the Lord is the salvation of people: In the faith of Christ; In the Love of Christ; In a strict obedience to the Gospel of Christ; In a close walking with God. In these things is the hope, the salvation of people, the true peace*

and tranquility of conscience. Return  
then with the Prophets words in your  
mouth, with which I shall conclude,  
We lye down in our shame, and our con- Jer. 3.25.  
fusion covereth us, for we have sinned  
against the Lord our God, and have not  
listened the voice of the Lord our God.

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*FINIS.*

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Psalm 42. 1, 2.

*As the Hart panteth after the water  
brooks : so panteth my soul after  
thee, O God.*

*My soul thirsteth for God, for the living  
God, when shall I come, and  
appear before God ?*



THE Title of this Psalm  
is, *To the chief Musitian  
for the Sons of Corah.*

remember *Justine Mar  
tyr* answering the Jew  
ish Question ; Why w

use not Musick in our Gospel Service  
as the Jewes did ; sayes it was ;  
in vain, for the Church in her infant  
estate , though singing be not so, and  
therefore still continued. However the  
Musick

*Just. Mart.  
Quest.  
Resp. 107.*

Musick was in *David's* time ( though since ceased ) a Divine Institution, not merely introduced, by the discretion of the chief Magistrate, we are assured by *Chron. 28. 11. 19.* which speaks it no precedent for Humane Inventions, in Acts, or Modes of Divine Worship. *Korah* was a *Levite*, he perished in his gainsaying against *Moses*, as you read, *Num. 16.* But his children died not. To these it seems by holy *David*, according to the Pattern, he had from the Spirit of God, *1 Chron. 28. 12. 13.* The charge of the Musick was committed, *1 Chron. 6. 37.* Who was the Author of this Psalm some question: judging it one of the *Sons of Korah*, and so interpreting it by the Genitive Case, a Psalm of Instruction, *לְבָנֵי קֹרַח*, thinking it composed in the time of the Captivity of *Babylon*. But the Spirit that breatheth in it is so like the Spirit breathing, *Psalms 63.* and *Psalms 84.* That I rather judge holy *David* the Author of it: and that it was composed by him in the time when *Saul* hunted him out of *Judea*, so as he could not ( as formerly ) enjoy the Institutions of God,

I                      which

*Nu. 16. 1.*

*V. de Muci  
ad loc.*

*V. Molle-  
rum ad  
loc. &c.*

which is the great business he lamenteth in this *Psalm*, expressing his earnest longings for them, and raising up his soul to an hope and confidence in God, that he would one day change his estate. It is termed *Maschil*, a *Psalm* of Instruction, and may generally serve to instruct us in the frame of a gracious Spirit what it will be, and our duty what we ought to doe under such a dispensation, when either by any natural or moral causes we are hindered from a communion with God, in his publick Institutions for Worship: for of such, it is apparent *David* speaketh both from ver. 2. *When shall I come and appear before God?* and ver. 4. where with sadness he remembers, how he went to go to the House of God with the multitude.

The Proposition I shall insist on, is this.

*Doctrine.*

*Prop. Under the severest dispensation of God to gracious souls, there will be found in them a singular thirst after God in his Institutions of publick Worship.*

Who ever was the Author of this *Psalm*, the Language of it speaks a god-gracious heart: if it was not *the man*, it was certainly *a man* according to Gods heart. The dispensation he was under, was sad enough, if he were in the captivity of *Babylon* (as *de Muci* and others think :) or if it was *David* separated from the Tabernacle, by the Violence of *Saul*. The dispensation was every way sad enough. Yet under these circumstances, see the temper of this gracious person: he cannot enjoy publick Institutions, but he can look after them, and long, he can with *Daniel*, open his window towards *Jerusalem*, and pray. He cannot drink out of the Wells of Salvation, but he can thirst for the waters of them, he cannot appear before God, but he can say unto God, *When shall I come and appear?* In fine, his Enemies have taken away his food, but they have not taken away his stomach; In the prosecution of this point. I shall,

1. Open the Metaphor of *thirsting*, *panting*, *breathing*.

*A Word in season.*

2. Shew you the singularity of the gracious souls thirst.
3. Thirdly, give you the causes of it and prove the point.
4. Lastly, Make some short application.

1. *Thirst is a natural affection:* caused through the want of some liquid thing to cool and refresh our natural parts alwayes attended with a desire of the thing thirsted for: so it implieth,

1. An apprehended suitableness of some object, to the creature's wants, that is thus affected to it.
2. A sensible want of it, we thirst not for drink, when our stomach and mouth is filled with it.
3. A desire and endeavour after it.

1. Every gracious soul apprehendeth suitableness in Gods Institutions to his wants. That there is such a suitableness, I shall demonstrate anon, this is not apprehended by every soul, but by every gracious soul it is, which proceedeth from his spiritual illumination and sense of his condition, to which the unregenerate



the regenerate soul is a stranger.

2. *It may possibly be, that a gracious soul may want this suitable spiritual food:* he may be hindered by natural causes, sickness, &c. by *moral causes*, he may be as *David* in the Land of the *Philistins*, as the children of *Israel* in *Babylon*. He may be at home, but the wells may be stopped, through the violence of men, the pits may be dry, through the heat of persecution, they may be so poisoned with *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, ( as in the *Popish Countreys* ) so fouled with the dust of humane inventions, unwholsomely mixt with some little of *Divine Institutions*, that he may want the *Institutions of God*, and he will be sensible of the want.

3. *His soul will be enlarged in desires after, what he doth not, or it may be cannot at present enjoy.* This I shall sufficiently evidence in shewing you :

2. What singularity there is in the thirst of a gracious soul after *Divine Institutions*.

1. Observe the Metaphor in the Text.  
As the *Hart panteth or brayeth* ; The word

תערו  
ערו

word translated *Hart*, properly signifieth the Female. The word translated *brayeth* or *panteth* properly signifies the sound that those creatures make. The *Hart* of all other creatures, is observed by Naturalists, to be more exceeding thirsty than others : for which I find three Reasons assigned.

V. De M. c.  
Mollerium  
ad loc.

1. They for the most part feed in montanous, dry, *desert* places, which more want moisture.

2. They say they ordinarily swallow *Serpents* : whose *heat* of poison inwardly more inflameth them.

3. When they have been hunted they find they cannot rest till they have found out some waters in which to refresh themselves. The Metaphor you see imports some singularity in thirst. Now the singularity of a gracious souls thirst will appear in three things.

1. In the *object* and *end* of it. The object you have in the Text. So panteth my soul for thee O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.

1. In the *ultimate object*. The ultimate object of a gracious souls thirst is not the *Institution* or *Ordinances*,

the God of that Ordinance. Thus here  
in the Text. So Psalm 63. 1. *My soul  
thirsteth for thee: my flesh longeth for thee.*  
ver. 2. *To see thy power, and thy glory.*  
An institution of God, is like another  
thing to a gracious soul, if God be not  
in it. As Absalom said, *What should I do  
at Jerusalem, if I may not see the Kings  
face.* So saith a spiritual heart, what  
shall I do at a Prayer, at a Sermon, at  
a Sacrament, if I meet with nothing of  
God there. A gracious soul desires an  
Ordinance, not as a man desires a picture  
to please his sense, but as he desires a  
*perspective*; that by the means of it he  
may see a Star, or the Moon, or an ob-  
ject a far off. And this is a *singularity*;  
an hypocrite if he desires to see the  
Vail, yet he desires not to look through  
the Vail. what communion with God,  
in a prayer, in hearing the Word, in a  
Sacrament means, he understands not,  
and *Ignoti nulla cupido*. He may de-  
sire an Ordinance; as thinking his at-  
tendance there, *the road to Heaven*, or  
the way to repute in the world, or a  
bit to stop the mouth of his Natural  
conscience, barking for some shew of

Religion; or as a pleasant Song, according to those in *Ezechiel, Chap. 33. 32.* But what the presence of God in the Ordinance meaneth, this he understandeth not, nor doth he thirst after it. Hence a Formalist, if he hath been at Church, is satisfied, let the Prayer and Preaching be what it will (provided it hath tickled his sense) yet his stomach is stayered, and he wonders every one is not as content as he. The ultimate object of a gracious souls thirst is not *his Fathers House*, but *his Fathers face* in his House. If he hath not seen that he comes away *a-thirst* from the *best wells*.

2. *In the mediate object.* The mediate object is the *performance*. An Hypocrite if he hath any desire to an Ordinance, yet he is very careless, as to the rites, and manner of the performance. It is not thus with a gracious soul. The reason lyes partly in what I said before, that the ultimate object of his thirst is *God*: the presence of God in an Ordinance: he knows nothing of this can be expected, where God is not sanctified in the duty by a regular

regular performance of it, and a strict observation of the rule, as to it, which God himself hath prescribed: he knows that in matters of Worship, God is more eminently jealous; that of all sins, none so provoke God, none so soon separate him from a people as errors in matter of Worship. This makes his regular appetite languid, and weak as to religious performances, where God hath indeed appointed the thing in the general, but man only hath presumed to direct the manner, for which also was sufficient direction in Gods word. His thirst is after peace, and unmixed Ordinances.

3. *As to the End*: The gracious heart desires the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby, 1 Pet. 2. 2. that he may profit by it; he thirsts after publick prayer, that he might pour out his soul before God, and receive an answer of peace; he thirsts after a Sacrament, that in it he may have a communion with Christ, that he might in it receive the communications of the vertue of the blood of Christ to his soul, further strengthening, quickning, or comforting

1 Pet. 2.2.

forting him. The hypocritical formalist thirsts after these things, only that he might stop the mouth of natural conscience, or that he might appear to men to have something of Religion, or for some such low and unworthy end. Thus the thirst of a gracious heart hath a singularity in it, as to the object and end.

Secondly, *It is singular as to the degree and strength of it.* As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, saith the Psalmist. A formalist thus never thirsteth, he hath never such an appetite to an Ordinance, but he can either attend it or let it alone. When he is hottest, tell him of a *Play*, or a *Market*, and he can turn aside out of the Church-path thither: if he be seen at a Sermon, or a Prayer, 'tis rather out of wantonness than appetite: hence a little thing turns him aside, and a little serves his turn; four hours at a Comedy is too little, one at a Sermon, half of one in a Prayer, is too much. If he hath not a Sermon at his door, he is not thirsty enough to go a mile to hear one. The gracious soul goes from City to City, from

from strength to strength, passeth through Cities, and streets, and broad places. *Psal. 119. 20. My soul breaketh with the longings it hath to thy judgments.* *Psal. 119. 20.*  
*Psal. 84. 2. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my flesh crieth out for the living God.* *Psal. 84. 2.*

3. The thirst of a gracious soul is singular in the constancy of it, and its insatiableness. *Psal. 119. 20. My soul breaketh for the longing it hath to thy judgments at all times.* A formalist hath his fits of thirst, but they are but at some times, when the good mood comes upon him; and he is quickly satisfied, quickly cloied. A gracious heart may have a greater thirst upon him at some times than at others, but the edge is never off his spiritual appetite, nor is he ever satisfied; he could (as to his spirit) his flesh indeed is weak ) be always hearing lively and powerful Sermons, always praying; he is troubled to see the Glass so soon out, and the shadows of the evening so soon stretched upon the Lords days, and cries out to God, *Blessed are they that are always before thee.* He blesteth the Sparrows and Swallows,



lows, that can make nests at the Lords Altars.

4. In fine, there is a singularity in this. The *thirst* of gracious souls is *real* and *spiritual*, the thirst of other souls is *dissembled* and *carnal*. An unregenerate man, whether profane and carnal, or formal and moral, may pretend a thirst after divine institutions, but he doth but pretend. What a stir did the generality of these make for Sacraments, when they have them with all the circumstances they desired, how little do they come at them? What longing did they pretend formerly, to some Forms of Devotion, which now they enjoy, how seldom are they at? how slightly do they attend? And as their thirst is pretended more than real, so it is *carnal* wherein it is real. There is a carnal part in *Divine institutions*. The

Heb. 9. 10. Apostle tells us the Jews had *carnal ordinances* imposed on them; he saith they were but *until the time of reformation*, i. e. until the *Gospel times*. Such was their *Musick*, their *Levitical gay garments*, their *ceremonial rites*, their *worldly Sanctuary*, which had the *golden censer*, the *golden*

golden pot that had Manna, &c. Such institutions as pleased the outward senses, but did not inwardly affect the heart, nor had much influence upon that. In opposition to these, *Job. 4. 24.* we are commanded to worship God in *spirit and truth*. Under the Gospel there is a carnal part also in Ordinances. In Prayer, in Preaching, the wit and neat composure or pronounciation of the Prayer or Sermon, they are but the carnal part. Now take an unsanctified heart, if it hath any thirst after any thing that hath the name, or looketh like a Divine institution, 'tis after the carnal part. You will see their copy, *Ezech. 33. 32.* *And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument.* Hence they mock at a Prayer that is not dressed up in fine language, and mock at Sermons that are not full of Sentences of Authors, pieces of wit, quibbles, and such like vanities, which (to use the term in the Prophet) are but like the *souls bread mixed up with mans dung*, which makes the gracious soul nauseate it. The hunger and thirst  
of

of a gracious soul is quite of another nature, Psal. 119. 140. *Thy word is pure,* 140. *(saith David) therefore doth thy servant love it.* The more plain, and spiritual, and scriptural, the more quick and powerful a Sermon is: the plainer and more spiritual the Prayer is, the more a truly gracious soul thirsteth after it, the more it allayeth his thirst and satisfieth his soul. Other preachings and prayers, which are rather starch'd Oration, and exercises of wit, and ostentations of parts, he seeth so little of God in, so unlike the copies in holy Writ, so disproportioned to their end, that he will have nothing to do with them as long as he can enjoy any other, and feeds upon them as men do upon carrion and dung, only when they can come by no better food. Thus I have shewed you the singularity of a gracious souls thirst after divine institutions.

That there is such a thirst, such a singular thirst, is evident from this instance in the Text, and that of David expressed Psal. 63. 1, 2. -----my soul  
 1, 2. *thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee*

in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. To see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. And again, Psal. 84. 1, 2. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even faineth for the courts of the Lord, and my flesh crieth out for the living God. It is evident from the diligence of Gods people in attending upon such institutions; it was prophesied of the Gospel times, that many should say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. Though there were very many corruptions crept into the Jewish worship, yet our Saviour ordinarily went to their Synagogues, and always to the Passover: and as to the last he saith, Luke 22. 15. With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you. He thirsted not after their inventions and traditions, those he condemned, reprov'd, bare open and frequent testimony against; but he thirsted after his Fathers institutions, though his Soul stood not in that need of them that we do. It is evident from the experience

Psal. 84.

1, 2.

Isa. 2. 3.

Luke 22.

15.

perience of every gracious heart, who finds this thirst within himself. But let us in the next place enquire the causes of this thirst, whence it is that in every gracious soul there is such a thirst, such a singular thirst after Gods institutions. I shall assign a three-fold cause.

1. The strictness of the Divine Precept.

2. The apprehension of the suitableness in them to the vacuities and wants of the soul.

3. A Christians experience of his former advantage from them.

1. *The strictness of the precept.* Waiting upon Gods institutions is a great piece of a Christians obedience. Of old, Circumcision, Sacrificing, the Passover, all fell under a strict precept; for the most part with a commination, *The soul that did them not should be cut off from his people.* We do not find the like threatening under the new Testament, but the gracious heart seareth the analogy of the one to the other, will evince it dangerous to neglect them. Whether it doth or no, he is one that rejoiceth in the Lords commandments above riches

and cries out, *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.* He is sensible that these are pieces of his homage to God, such pieces of homage as God requireth in a special manner, and wherein his soul draweth nigh to God; this maketh him thirst after them. But this is not all.

*Psal. 119.*

*14.*

2. *He so well understands the state of his own soul, and the nature of divine institutions, that he apprehendeth in them an exceeding suitableness to his souls wants.* This highly increaseth his spiritual thirst. Let me here open a little this suitableness of divine institutions to the state of the best souls on this side of heaven.

1. *The best of souls are growing, but never come to their full growth. Now the institutions of God are the souls food and nutriment; in order to this growth. The mark which is set in a Christians eye is, The fulness of the measure of stature which is in Christ. Perfection. Being holy as Christ is holy, perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. These are high marks; every good Christian levels at them, none hits them. St. Paul himself had not*  
*K attained,*

attained, but this one thing he did, forgetting *what was behind*, he pressed on to what *was before*. A good Christian never standeth still, but is always moving, adding to his *faith, vertue*; to *vertue, temperance, &c.* Growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ. Going on from strength to strength. Now the institutions of God are the means of growth, they are the souls food and nourishment. 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.* Psal. 119. 130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple.* They make wise the simple, enlighten the eyes. By them the servants of God are warned, &c. As well then can a growing child not hunger and thirst after food, the proper nourishment of its body; as soon may a man not *hunger and thirst* for his meat and drink, by which his soul is kept in life, as a Christian not hunger and thirst after the institutions of God, by which he groweth, and by which he is preserved in his spiritual state.

2. *Though the weakest of Gods children be in a better state than the best unregenerate*



rate man, yet none of their souls are in perfect health. Now the Ordinances of God are their spiritual physick. The child of God, while he lives on this side heaven, is like a man or woman that hath a weak crazy constitution, he is not always alike ill disposed, nor always complains of the same distempers; but 'tis seldom that he is not complaining of one distemper or other. One while of an *hard heart*, another while of an *heavy, dull, and dead spirit*; one while of a *sad and dejected spirit*, another while of a *distracted vain spirit*, &c. some ailment or other he always carries about with him, and will do, while his body of death abides in him, the fountain of all spiritual diseases. One while he is buffeted by Satan, another while he is pressed with his own corruptions. Now the Ordinances of God are the leaves of the tree of life, appointed for the healing of the Nations. David was sadly distempered with a temptation from the prosperity of the wicked, while he was in adversity, till he went into the sanctuary. Hannah was of a troubled spirit, till she went into the tabernacle to pray, then her coun-

Psal. 73.  
13.

tenance was no more sad. Psal. 119. 81. My soul fainteth for thee, but I hope in thy word, verse 50. And so in many other Texts. As soon therefore may one labouring under daily pain, weakness, and distempers, not desire deliberately what shall heal him, as the child of God no thirst after the institutions of God which are *All-heal* to his soul. The great and easie means for his spiritual cure.

Thirdly, *The gracious soul is always looking after God, but never in this life fully seeth him.* Gods institutions are as glasses to the soul, by which it hath a clearer and fuller sight of God. The power and glory of God are seen in the Sanctuary Psal. 63. 3. Next to the beholding of God face to face is this beholding of him in duties of communion with him. O what a communion with God doth the soul of a godly person oft-times enjoy in a Prayer, in a Sacrament, in the hearing of the Word, and every sight of God is exceeding sweet. Thus I have opened to you the second thing, which is the cause of this singular spiritual thirst.

3. A third is, *The Saints experiences*

## *A Word in season.*

*God in Ordinances.* There is no gracious soul, but at one time or other, in Prayer, in hearing the Word, in receiving the Sacrament, hath tasted and seen how good the Lord is. Now it is of our nature, having tasted that which we have found good and excellent, the more to long for it.

But I shall adde no more to the Doctrinal part of this discourse, I shall now come to the Application.

In the first place we may learn what to judge of those, who either *despise Gods institutions*, or at least are very indifferent to them. 1. Use,  
Instruct.

1. There are too too many that despise them, they mock at *Preaching*, at *Sacraments*, at *Prayer*, they like a Play better, or see no need of them at all: some out of a *principle of profaneness*, sordid souls, that savour nothing of heaven and heavenly things, nothing of that noble end for which man is created, or to which he is obliged to direct his actions, whether they have souls or no they scarce understand: or if they have, whether they differ from the *sensitive* souls of Dogs or Swines, they

they consider not. What the natural and animal life means they understand, but what the spiritual life meaneth they understand not. The drunkard thirsts after his cups of wine, or other liquor; the voluptuous man after his pleasures, the covetous man after wealth: but for those holy institutions of God, which are *pabulum animæ*, those precious things by which mens *souls live*, they understand them not, they trample them under foot, and it may be rend them who bring them to them.

Others there are that are not altogether thus bad, but yet are very indifferent as to these things; they can hear a Sermon, and they can let it alone, whether ever they be at one or no, whether ever they sit at the Lords Table or no, whether ever they pray or no, they are very indifferent. O how unlike is the spirit of these men to the spirit of holy *David*? What would you say to a child that should be born, and never cry for food? would not you say it had nothing in it of humane nature? or that it would not live long? You may as certainly conclude concern-

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ing such souls as these, that they have nothing in them of the *Divine Nature*, and they do not live at all the life of grace, nor ever will live the life of glory. There is no sadder sign, either of a *dead soul*, dead while it lives, *dead in trespasses and sins*; or of a *decaying perishing soul*, than the want of this *spiritual appetite*, this *hungring and thirsting* after the institutions of God.

Hence (secondly) observe, *How necessarily precious the true able faithful Ministers of the Gospel must be to gracious souls.* They are the earthen vessels, which bring this heavenly treasure.

It was said of old, *Blessed is he that comes unto us in the name of the Lord.* And

*Rom. 10. 15. How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace.* *Rom. 10. 15.*

The Ordinance of the Ministry in this hath the preheminence of other institutions, because by it we come to the enjoyment of all other publick Ordinances. How shall they bear without a preacher, (saith the Apostle) and how shall they preach except they be sent? Ordinances of publick communion with God, being justly precious to gracious

souls, the key to them, the hand which brings them must needs also be precious. I say, *true, able and faithful* Ministers.

1. *True Ministers.* Every pretender is not so, there were Prophets of old, there are Ministers now in the world, whom Christ never sent. Under the Gospel there were *false Apostles*, that brought λόγους περυστιομένων, high fine words. Those whom God hath sent are easily distinguished from others, not so much from the particular Church that sendeth them, which may differ in her external Rites and forms of mission, but from their *ability and faithfulness*, the two following things.

2 Cor. 3.  
2. 6.

2. *Able Ministers.* Able to what? To read a Prayer, or a Sermon, a little ability serveth for this. *Able to teach*, able to pour out his peoples souls unto God in prayer, to speak a word in season to the weary, to instruct the ignorant, resolve the doubting, confirm the staggering. Through Gods assistance to open the eyes of the blind, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Able to open the whole

Acts 26.  
18.

whole counsel of God unto people. To divide the word of God aright, shewing themselves workmen that need not be ashamed.

3. *Faithful Ministers.* A man may be able that is not faithful; that's a faithful Minister that doth the Lords work faithfully, feeding the souls of people with food convenient for them, not with notions and language they understand not. A faithful Minister is one that considereth his end, to convert, build up, and perfect souls to eternity, and proportioneth due means, and applyeth them faithfully to that end. He *preacheth in season, out of season; rebuketh, exhorteth, with all faithfulness, meekness, authority, gravity, &c.* that he may save his own soul, and the souls of others. He administreth holy institutions, according to the rule his Master hath given him, and durst not erre from it. Now I say it is impossible, but such as these should be exceeding precious to gracious souls; and for the same reason others must be as vile and abominable to them. As they are the cheats of immortal souls, and that in things of highest



highest importance and concernment; such as instead of being means to convey the waters of life to them, are the means to keep them from them, and to deceive them with the puddle waters of mens fancies. But I shall not dwell longer on this.

3. Br.

Thirdly, Observe from hence, That a good Christian is to be judged much from his affection to *Ordinances*. As in other pieces of his duty, so in this, he is not so much to be determined from his *actions*, as from his *affections*. St. Paul did the things which *he would not*, and *could not do those things which he would*, but yet *he delighted in the Law of God as to the inward man*. So it is here. Presence at Gods Ordinance will not conclude a Christian *indeed*, formalists and hypocrites may be present; *Yet they seek me daily*, (saith God.) A godly man may be absent, *David* is forcedly absent.

Isa 58. 2.

1 Sam. 2.

17.

Or it may be as 1 Sam. 2. 17. The Priests were so vile, and their administrations so irregular, that Gods people may (as they did there) *abhor the offering of the Lord*. But here's the difference, A wicked man, though he drinks, yet doth

doth not *thirst*; his going to Ordinances is like the *drunkards* going to the ale-house, more to satisfy his lust than to quench any thirst; he hath a lust to appear to be something, when he is nothing, to give what credit he can to some particular *person* that administreth, or to some particular *way of worship*, or to run thwart to others. The godly man, though he cannot, though he dare not always drink, yet he *always thirsts*. A temptation may awe him from drinking at the purest and most wholesome waters of the Sanctuary. Or some mixture may make him afraid, but nothing can keep him from a due thirsting after Gods holy and pure Institutions.

In the next place therefore, let us take an hint from hence to try whether the true *Spirit of Christians* breatheth in us yea or no. *Grande est Christianum esse non dici*. It is a small thing to be called Christians, it is a great thing to be a Christian indeed. If thou beest so, thy soul will thirst after the institutions of God. As a new-born babe thou wilt desire the milk of the Word, that thou

Use 2.

thou maist grow thereby. And that thou maist not deceive thy self, consider what thou hast heard.

1. Thy thirst will be *after God in the Ordinance.* For thee, for the living God, saith David. If thy thirst be such as can be allayed without any thing of God, I mean, any influence of God upon thy soul through the conduit of the Ordinance, it is no more than a formal hypocrite may have. What sayest thou, Christian? Is this the temper of thy soul? Thou longest for an hour of prayer, to hear a good Sermon, and when thou hast had thy desire, art thou unsatisfied still, unless thou hast found God coming into thy soul in Prayer, and speaking to thee in the Sermon, this speaks a Christian indeed; if any thing less than this will satisfy thee, thou wilt fetch nothing of evidence from it, it is no more than hypocrites may do, who take these attendances for their righteousness, and have a kind of thirst to them, that they may have something to glory in before God.

2. Thy thirst (secondly) will be *after divine institutions in their purest and most powerful*

*powerful administrations.* The end of a Christian in waiting upon God in holy institutions, being partly that he might *pay an homage to God, i. e.* do what God hath required of him as his duty ; and partly that in them *he may meet with God*, and find his presence and power. His thirst must necessarily be thus circumstanced, for he argueth thus with himself, Hath God any where prescribed me this service or mode of Worship ? If not, how can I think to please or do homage to him by an action which he never required of me, nor did it ever come into his heart to direct me any such thing ? Again, Wherefore should I desire Ordinances, but that in them I may see the *presence* and *power* of God ? Can I expect either the *presence* or *power* of God in humane inventions ? And as his thirst is after the most pure, so it is after the most *quick* and *lively* administrations ; after such praying where the heart is most melted, and poured out like water before the Lord. Such preaching, where the Preacher comes closest to the soul, and does not play off in generals only,

as if he were afraid to touch the sores of souls, or to tell people of their sins. For a judicious Christian, though he knows the efficacy of the Ordinance, doth not depend upon the purity or ability of the Administrator; yet he also knows, that in this period of time God useth not to work miracles, but to concur with probable means, means that have some rational tendency to the end; and suitably he observeth, that God in the dispensation of his grace, ordinarily co-operates with such Ministers as live their Doctrine, and speak the Oracles of God as the Oracles of God; with plainness, gravity, life and power. He knows the end of preaching is not scratching a peevish humour, nor tickling the ear, but affecting and changing the heart. *David desired to see the power and glory of God in his Sanctuary.*

*Psal. 63. 1.*

*Thirdly,* If we truly thirst after Divine institutions, we will not despise a plainer draught, provided it be wholesome. God distributeth his gifts even to his Ministers variously: to some he giveth more excellent abilities as to the

same acts. Some are not only able to preach the wholesome Word of God, but as good Cooks, they are able to make the wholesome food of the Word appear more lovely by handsome language, apt similitudes, neat allusions. Others have not this ability, yet it may be open and apply the Word of God faithfully. I must confess, the best of Christians have cold, and feeble, and teachy stomachs, that they have need of all due art to commend their food to them: yea, and this excellency of gifts in some is the special priviledge of some, with which God ordinarily blesteth them in order to some more eminent services for souls, than others shall be honoured to do. And therefore cannot blame Christians, knowing the dulness and deadness of their hearts, to desire the best advantages they can give themselves, and (where choice is) to desire to sit under the ablest Ministry. *Austin* once wished to hear *Paul* in the *Pulpit*. But yet the soul that truly thirsts after Gods institutions, will not despise his spiritual food, though it be not brought him in a Lordly

Lordly dish; He considereth thus with himself, 'Tis the word that nourisheth my soul, not the wit, not the quaint expressions are which it is served to me, the good of these is determined in my carnal part. I must love the word, *because* it is pure, not because it is wittily delivered, and the matter neatly couched. A good stomach we say, needeth no sauce. Therefore though in a time of choice and plenty a gracious heart will prefer the able Preachers, who can give the word more advantage by their parts. Yet as ever then he will not despise the performances of him who hath the means, gifts and abilities (provided that he doth not handle the word of God deceitfully, or negligently) so in a time of scarcity he will much less do it.

Fourthly, *The soul that truly thirsteth after Divine Institutions, will embrace what he can, when he cannot enjoy what he would.* When I say, he will embrace what he can: I mean what is satisfied in his conscience that he may enjoy without sin. Sin is such a thing, as nothing can tempt a gracious



soul to it, he knows that it is impossible he should please God by an action wherein he presumptuously sinneth against him, especially too in matters of worship, where he is more especially jealous, he knows participation of Ordinances is not absolutely necessary to salvation; if therefore he cannot hear a Sermon, or receive a Sacrament, but he must before or in it, defile his soul with sin, he rather chooseth to forbear the Ordinance, than run the guilt of the sin. But suppose circumstances such, that a good Christian cannot enjoy every institution, but some he may. I say, he that hath a true spiritual thirst, will enjoy what he can, when he cannot enjoy what he desireth. The Disciples would gladly have heard *Paul* in the Synagogues as they had wont, Acts 19. 8. perswading the things concerning the Kingdom of God. But when men come to be hardened, and to speak evil of the righteous wayes of God before the multitude, so as *Paul* can speak no more openly: those that are true Disciples will hear him though in the School of Tyrannus. If *Paul* cannot

L Preach

Preach at *mid-day*, and *break bread*, they  
 Acts 20.7. will hear him till *midnight*. I do not  
 speak here to plead for those *coetus an-*  
*telucani*; which the Heathen so much  
 scandalized Christians in *Origens* time  
 for, but only to shew you by these in-  
 stances, that it is no new thing for  
 Christians to make any shift to taste any  
 thing of Christ in his Ordinances. The  
 Antients justified the Christians of those  
 days for those meetings, though in times  
 of liberty they had not been Eligible.  
 If a Christian truly thirsts after Divine  
 Institutions, if he cannot go *with the*  
*multitude* to the House of God, yet he  
 will not omit the homage of *two*  
 Jo. 20.19. *three* gathered together in the Lord's  
 name. The Disciples when they could  
 not assemble openly, nor have doors  
 open for fear of the *Jews*, yet they  
 assembled and shut the doors, and enjoyed  
 the Institutions of God, and Jesus came  
 and stood in the midst amongst them  
 and said, *Peace be unto you*. It argues  
 not a thirsty and ingenuous, but a wan-  
 ton and teachy soul, when it will make  
 use of no means of Grace, because  
 cannot enjoy all under such circum-  
 stances

stances as he desireth.

5. Fifthly, Who so hath the true Spirit of a Christian in this thing, will be content for the enjoyment of Gods institutions to encounter some difficulties. We use to say, *Hunger will break through a stone wall.* We see what those natural passions will do in brute creatures, and in reasonable creatures. The spiritual hunger and thirst will do much more with a Christian, and in reason must, as the preservation of a spiritual life, and the prospect, and hope of that life which is Eternal, is more valuable than the preservation and enjoyment of a natural life.

6. Lastly, A true Christian when he cannot enjoy *Divine Institutions* yet will be crying after them. *When shall I come and appear before God,* saith David: and again, Psalm 27. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple.* But by this time methinks I hear some good Christians say to me.

Psalm 27. 4.

Case. Is this indeed the temper of every true Christian, May I then conclude my self a true child of God, if I find such a thirst in my soul, after God in his Ordinances, though I do not meet with those enjoyments of God in his Ordinances which I desire? Saith another, If this be true, I am much afraid of my self, I do not find such a thirst as you have mentioned, or if any, yet not after all Ordinances. Nor is it so even a temper as I desire. Sometimes I am passionately desirous of them, or of some of them: at other times me thinks I find too much of an indifferent Spirit in this point: I even force my self sometimes to my duty, at other times I cannot attend them, but I do not find such a desire to them, as I would do: but could almost be content to live without them. What shall I judge of my self in this case?

To this case which is complex, containing the cases of different souls, I shall speak in some few Conclusions following.

*A Real, Spiritual, vehement thirst after God, in Divine Institutions, will ( I think unquestionably ) speak a true Christian.* I say a true thirst, not pretended and feigned, a *spiritual thirst* after the pure, divine, substantial part of the Institution, separated from the less significant circumstances of the administration *after God in the Ordinance*, when the enjoyment of the presence of God, and communion with him is made the ultimate object, and *Ordinances* are desired for that. This thirst I say will argue one to have tasted of the grace of God: For,

1. *Concl.*

1. We find no record in Scripture of any such thirst, but in truly honest and gracious souls.

2. Whence can such a thirst proceed, but from the new nature, making choice of its spiritual food? Those that walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh, *Those after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit.* In

Rom. 8. 5.

Ordinances, the carnal man can mind nothing but the *carnal part* : he is more pleased with the noise of the Musick, than the matter of the Song; with the *tone*, and *method*, and *behaviour*, and *phrase*, and *wit* of the Preacher, than the *spiritual* convincing matter of the Sermon: more with the *tone* and *language* of him that prayeth, or ministrereth in prayer, than with the *pouring out of the soul in prayer* ; it argues a spiritual man in duties to mind the *things of the Spirit*. In them,

3. Again, A Christian is not to be judged from his *success in duty*, nor from his *action*, but from his *affection* and temper to it. The success is from God, and is various, as it pleaseth him to deal with a poor soul. In his action he may be hindered of his will, by the incumbrance of the body of death, which cleaveth to the best of Gods children, and bringeth the Law of his mind in captivity, to the Law of his members. So that were a Christian before me that could say no more than this, *My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Ordinances of God*, I cannot say, that when

I enjoy them, I find so much in them, of peace, or satisfaction as I desire, but yet my heart beateth for them, I could be content to be a dweller in the House of the Lord, alwayes hearing his word, alwayes at prayer, yet I cannot hear as I would, nor pray as I desire. I should not doubt to say, Be of good chear, thy soul is in a good condition : *Flesh and blood hath never revealed this to thee*, this thirst, this passionate desire, cometh from him that hath called thee to be partaker of his distinguishing grace. There is no such thirst found in any unrenewed soul.

Secondly, *As it is with the natural body, the appetite may decay, but the body cannot long subsist without some appetite : so it is with the soul ; there may be some decay in the spiritual appetite ; but the soul that hath a truth of spiritual life, cannot long subsist without some spiritual appetite to Divine Institutions.* I say, there may in a gracious soul be some abatement of spiritual appetite to Divine Institutions, which may be caused,

2. *Concl.*

1. *From a plenty of them : through*  
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out



our natural corruption: when we are full we wax wanton; when the Israelites had a fulness of Manna, Num. 21. 5. They cryed out, *Our soul loatheth this light bread.* 1 Sam. 3. 1. *The word of God was precious in those dayes, there was no open vision:* intimating, it was less precious, when it was more common. We have seen sad experiences of it. Have you seen persons delicately fed with plenty of choicest meats, pingle at a good and wholsom dish before them, scarce knowing where to pick a bit to please them, or how to advantage their stomach with Sauce rare enough, and turning it away when there hath been but a little error of a Cook in roasting or garnishing it, or in the cleanness or brightness of a dish it hath been served up in: When a hungry labouring man, hath presently sell greedily to it, though without any Sauce and in a plain dish: Such a sight you might lately have seen in the House of God amongst us, how nice and squeamish were Christians, how little they cared they for an honest Sermon, if not delivered with such a grace, such an authority

authority and gravity ( as was the gift of God to some particular persons ) with such neatness of method and phrase, as was not the portion of every faithful Minister to serve them with. This proceeded only from our corruptions in regard of our plenty of spiritual enjoyments.

2. Secondly, Such an abatement of *spiritual appetite may proceed from the pre-eminency of some particular lusts or corruptions.* It is no wonder if the young man that eateth coals and dirt, or the man whose stomach is clogged with crudities and noxious humours, abates in his appetite to his due food. A child of God, though he doth not feed on coals and dirt, lusts and corruptions; his daily bread, as natural and unregenerate men do, yet he may sometimes have a vitiated pallat ( a stranger may come even to *David's* house ) there may be a time when *iniquities* may prevail against him, when the Sons of *Belshazzar* may be too hard for him, and in such a day, there will be an abatement of the spiritual appetite to its proper food.

3. Sometimes

3. Sometimes *this abatement may be caused from some discouragement which the soul hath received at the Ordinance.* It may, and it often doth so happen, that the soul of a Christian findeth not that satisfaction at Sermons, at Sacraments, in hours of prayer, which he expected, and hoped for; but it may be he returneth from the Ordinance more sad than he went, and this from day to day, and this discouragement abateth his appetite, he hungers, he thirsteth still, but not with such a degree, as he formerly found, under better encouragements.

4. Lastly, It sometimes happeneth by *his listening to some powerful Temptation.* A melancholick fancy, or an ill report of our food from others will often spoil our natural stomach, and at least abate our appetite. We see it often in melancholick persons, either some odd fancy of their own, or some idle story of another persuading them the meat is not proper for them, will take them of their stomach, the same unhappy humour will do it as to our spiritual food, especially if advantaged by any suggestion,

suggestion of the *Envious One*, who knows our advantage from the institutions of God.

Upon those accounts ( amongst others ) I say it is possible that the appetite of a good Christian may abate, or seem to abate, as to his proper spiritual food : but a soul that truly lives the spiritual life cannot long want an appetite, any more, than a body can long live without appetite to meat.

Thirdly, *It is very possible, that a jealous Christian may mis-judge himself as to his spiritual thirst :* and this 1. Either judging he hath none, when he either hath not so much as he desireth, or not so much as he hath formerly had, or not so much to one Divine Institution as to another.

1. When he hath not *so much as he desireth*. The truly gracious soul is exceeding covetous, as soon may the mare, or the barren womb, or any of those things *Salomon* mentions as insatiable be satisfied ; as the gracious soul say, *I have enough* of any gracious disposition ; now this a great error to conclude

3. Concl.

conclude a total want of the thing, from a *partial want* only relating to a degree. Besides, a gracious soul is naturally *exceeding jealous* and *suspicious*; jealous of Christs love to it; suspicious of its own love to Christ, and this indeed makes it take advantage to misjudge it self, from the want of a desired degree of grace.

2. Secondly, *When it doth not find such a vehement thirst as it hath formerly had*, either in the beginning of its Conversion, or it may be at some particular times since: though a gracious soul never wants an appetite to the institutions of Christ, yet there are times when its appetite is greater, and thirst stronger and more vehement: as First,

1. *In the beginning of its Conversion*. When the soul hath received the first powerful impressions of the word upon its conscience, and is first raised to a lively hope in the promise. Oh how sweet then is every opportunity of hearing, prayer, &c. It is the observation of Divines, that in this time affections are alwayes strongest, passions for God alwayes highest; the reason is

because

because the souls taste is then most imperfect; its sense of mercy quickest. The Woman loves her Husband as well afterward, as upon her first marriage: but not so passionately afterwards as at first.

2. *After some restraint from those enjoyments, whether from natural or moral causes.* God in the Prophecy of *Amos* threatens a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. Then (saith he): they shall run from City to City, to seek one who shall speak to them in the name of the Lord.

3. *In the beginning of some spiritual desertion:* Cant. 3. 2. at this time the Sponse rose, and went about the City, in the streets, and in the broad wayes seeking him whom her soul loved. I say in the beginning, for many times in the process of a desertion, temptations arise upon the soul from the discouragements which it meets with in performance of spiritual duties. Now it is an erroneous judgement to determine that we have no spiritual hunger and thirst, because we have it not in so great a degree.

3. Thirdly,

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3. Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, *A soul may be afraid, or at least not so fond of an Ordinance after discouragements met with in it, and yet may have a true thirst to it.* A man eats, and is continually sick after his meat, it will make him not to be so fond of his meat; yet he may have mind enough to it; he sits down with a kind of fear to his meat, yet he hath an appetite to it.

4. Fourthly, *A temptation may prevail upon a soul. That he shall dishonour God, or encrease his own damnation by waiting upon God in such or such an Ordinance, this makes him he dare not do it, yet his appetite to it may be good enough.*

4. *Concl.* It is very possible, that a Christian may have a more singular, special appetite to one Ordinance than another. There is no reason for this in the Ordinance. All Ordinances have the same stamp of Divine Institution upon them; an attendance upon them, all falling under the same Authority of Divine Precept; all of them being under a like Ordination for the beginnings or perfectings of grace, yet there is a reason for this

our self-love; which enclineth every one most to desire and delight in those institutions, in which he hath met with more sensible manifestations of the presence, power and goodness of God: hence you shall find some Christians more delighted in prayer, others more in hearing the word. Though the fault of this be the corruption of our hearts, yet it is no more than is the ordinary weakness and infirmity of the most precious souls; and therefore a Christian finding this hath no reason to mis-judge himself as totally wanting his spiritual appetite.

*The want of appetite to any institution of Christ, is what no gracious soul ought allow himself in.* I told you before, that they all have the Image and Superscription of the Lord Jesus Christ upon them. They all fall under an equal authority of Divine Precept. *Then saith holy David ) shall I not be ashamed, when I shall have respect to all thy commandments.* They are all ( as I said before ) under an ordination for our souls advantage, and are the proper food of Christians; and there can be no

5. Concl.

no reason assigned for a partial respect to any institution of Christs, but some *selfishness* in us. If therefore this be thy *temper* (Christian!) that thou art enamoured, and exceeding fond upon one Ordinance, of another not so. Look upon it as thy infirmity, not condemning thy self for it as one not at all thirsting after God in his institutions but as what thou oughtest not to allow thy self in, but to groan under, to search the cause of it, and not to leave thy soul until thou hast brought it to a more even temper.

6. *Concl.* Lastly, *As a total want of this spiritual thirst after Divine Institutions unquestionably speaketh a dead soul*; one that hath nothing of the life of grace but is dead in trespasses and sins still, and never tasted how good the Lord is *so a faint decaying appetite to them, argueth a declining and a decaying soul.* Let us be upon what principle it will, whether of looseness, not being able to bear the strict yoke of Christ, and to keep thy self so close to duties: Or from a dream of a state of perfection, and a life of God above Ordinances. The

season is plainly here. There is no such thing as absolute perfection here. Ordinances are the souls food : and while a soul lives on this side of Heaven, it cannot better live without them, than the natural body can live without water. Observe I pray you,

1. *Spiritual life lyes in spiritual union with Christ.* All life consists in union, the natural life in the union betwixt the soul and body. Eternal life is nothing else but an union with God in glory : so spiritual life is nothing but the souls spiritual union with Christ.

2. *All Union is preserved by communion in mutual communication :* the natural union which is betwixt the soul and body is preserved, by the souls communication of its self to the body in various influences. Eternal life will be maintained by Gods communications of himself to the souls of his people glorified, and their communications of themselves unto him : His shining upon them with glory, their beholding him with love and satisfaction. The *spiritual union* that also is maintained by

M                      Christs

Christs communication of himself to the soul, and the souls reciprocal communications of it self to Christ; God upholds, strengthens, quickens, comforteth the soul; the soul eyeth God, adhereth to him, trusteth and hopeth in him, and fetches down what is in Christ home to it self by these exercises of grace.

3. *All communion betwixt Christ and a soul is either by secret impressions, acts and influences, or else by Ordinances.* By secret impressions, acts and influences; and these are more ordinarily on Gods part, and more especially on our parts in and by Ordinances. It is true, the soul hath its soliloquies, and silent acts of communion with God; it may, and that out of an Ordinance, meditate on him, exercise an act of faith, love, hope, &c. All which are acts of communion with God; but these are more eminently performed in duties of Worship, and infinitely helped, and advantaged by them. It is true also, that God sometimes out of a more publick and open act of Worship may communicate himself to a soul, and doubtless doth, it may be by night while it is upon his

bed, while it sits alone in the house; but most eminently in *Ordinances*: David saw the Lords power and glory in his Sanctuary. It was his promise of old; *Wheresoever I record my name to dwell, there will I meet my people and bless them.* God of old you know was wont to appear betwixt the Cherubims; when Christs Disciples were met together once and again after his resurrection, when Christ came in amongst them, and said, *Peace be to you.* The Promise under the New Testament is, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I will be in the midst amongst them.*

Hence 4. The soul spiritually united to Christ, must as naturally thirst after *Divine Institutions*, as the body after the means of preserving the union betwixt the soul and it.

The decay of this thirst must needs argue a decaying soul: for as *Hezekiah* said *Isa. 38.* (either of Promises, or Affections, I know it is variously interpreted) *By these things men live.* By these things the union betwixt the soul and Christ is maintained. And as the want of appetite in the body to pro-



per food argues the stomach filled, or cloyed with noxious and pernicious humours; so the want of this Spiritual appetite, speaks a soul clog'd with some pernicious lusts and corruptions. But I have insisted too long upon this branch of Application.

**Exhort.**

I shall finish this discourse with one word of Exhortation. That you would keep alive this spiritual thirst after the Institutions of God, and that under those circumstances which you have heard. You have heard ( and I hope I need not repeat it to you ) how great an evidence it is of a gracious heart, how much it was the temper of the Saints of God who have lived before us; I need not speak more by way of Argument in this case. I shall only prescribe some directions in order to it, and I have done.

1. *Keep alive in your souls the true notion of them.* The true notion of them is this, *They are appointments of Christ for our salvation, and in the performance of which he hath promised to meet the souls that seek him.* So long as Ordinances are apprehended as Institutions of Christ they will be precious to all those to whom

whom Christ is precious. The soul  
heareth concerning the Sacrament of the  
Supper, *Do this in remembrance of me*;  
and it is presently enflamed with a de-  
sire to the Ordinance. Should I not  
(saith an honest soul) *remember him*  
that died upon the cross for me, I will  
remember his death untill his coming  
again. *Go preach the Gospel to every crea-*  
*ture*; *He that believeth, and is baptized*  
*shall be saved*: And again, *He that hear-*  
*eth you, heareth me*. The gracious soul  
adeth this. Should I not *hear Jesus*  
*Christ*, saith the soul? Indeed if the  
preacher instead of *preaching Christ*,  
preacheth himself, or preacheth contra-  
ry to what is apparently the revealed  
truth and will of Christ, the case is  
otherwise: but it is impossible an Or-  
dinance should be administred accor-  
ding to the institution of Christ; but a  
gracious soul retaining a true notion of  
these institutions, must thirst after it;  
especially, when he considers them as  
institutions for the good of a soul,  
in the performance of which, he  
is promised to meet it. Indeed the  
case is otherwise, if it once falls under

a mistake in the due notion of Ordinances. If it once fancieth, that Preaching is nothing but making an Oration, an exercise of parts or wit, and therefore the quibbling Sermons are best. The soul of a gracious person doth not lye so near the air as to desire to be delighted in such pleasing sounds. If once a Christian comes to apprehend religious performances, but as politick constitutions, for keeping people in some awe, or under some such other mean notion; Its thirst after them is spoiled. Though it be something to an honest heart, that the Politick State under which it liveth, hath need of them, to keep people from degenerating to Beasts: yet it is more to it to consider; Its immortal soul hath need of them, to keep it from everlasting burnings, from troubles of conscience, &c. But,

2. Secondly, *Keep but a watchful eye upon your own hearts:* Know your selves your own wants and weakneses, and you need no more (considering what I said under the former head) to bring you to an appetite, or to preserve in your

your souls a due appetite to Gospel Institutions; he that observeth the proneness of his heart to wax hard, will easily understand the need he hath of the word to soften it; he that considers his own forgetfulness of what his Lord hath done for him, will thirst after the Sacrament of the Supper that he may in it *remember the Lords death untill he come.* Whoso observeth his own weakness to spiritual duties, to resist strong corruptions, will thirst for the Word and Sacraments to strengthen him, he that considers his daily need of Divine influences will thirst after an hour of prayer, that he may beg them from God. In short, there's no soul is indifferent to Ordinances, but he who never tasted how good the Lord is, who either knoweth nothing of God, or nothing as he ought to know it; study thy self, understand thy own state, that's enough.

3. *Keep your selves under the purest and most lively administrations.* I call those the purest administrations, where there is nothing, or least of mans mixture, where Ordinances are administered

most exactly according to the Divine Rule. The Doctrine of the *Perfection of the Scriptures*, is a point we defend against the Papists. All Protestants grant it as to matters of Doctrine, why they should not also agree, that it is so, as to matters of *Worship and Discipline*, I can not tell. As to *acts of Worship* they all yield it too, as to circumstances of humane actions in Divine Worship, viz. such as no humane actions (as such) can want, none can deliberately contend for it. The Question is concerning Ceremonies, or if they will call them so, *circumstances of Worship*. In very deed it will be a nice distinction, and such as can abide no test, to distinguish betwixt an *act of Worship*, and a *circumstance of Worship*. I mean such a circumstance as is not appendant to the action, from its nature, and necessarily, but affixed to it by men without any necessity. But not to digress here into that dispute; The more strictly a Gospel Institution is administred according to the letter and examples of Christ and his Apostles in Holy Writ, the more there is of God in it, the more of Di-

vine presence and influence is to be expected in it, and from it, The more plain and Scriptural a Sermon is, the more authority it comes down with upon the conscience. The honest heart saith to the quaint and oratorical Preacher, to the quoter of Fathers and Schoolmen to justify what he saith. *Paul* I know, and *Jesus* I know. The Old Testament I know, and the New I know; but for *Augustine*, and *Hierom*, and *Aquinas*, who are they? Possibly worthy persons in their Ages: but it is the word of God, not their dictates which command the conscience. For your high phrased Preachers, they signify nothing to the conscience, the hearers, (as *Luther* was wont to say) *intelligunt verbum arte super se compositum ideo nau- cant*: they loath the word thus cancelled up in the language of men puffed up in the conceit of their own parts, and desirous to seem some thing; when indeed they are nothing but folly and vanity. There is abundance of preaching is good for nothing but to spoil good Christians stomachs to hearing, and to make them loath their food,

food, by reason of the fantastick sauce: if you would keep your appetite to Ordinances, keep the purest and most lively administrations of them.

4. *Fourthly, Remember the dayes of old, the years of former times.* I doubt not but many of you, have heretofore tasted how good the Lord hath been, you have tasted it in a Sermon, convincing you of sin, working faith in you, bringing a word in season to your souls, that hath even ravished your souls with the joy of it. You have enjoyed much of God in a Sacrament, in a few hours of prayer. Oh, let not the memory of those good dayes to your souls, go out of your hearts; and if you remember them, you cannot but long for more of them.

It is almost impossible to imagine that a soul, that ever in earnest tasted of God in Ordinances, should not cry out, *Lord evermore give us that bread:* those that grow weary of Divine Institutions, are such as never experienced the goodness and excellency of them.

5. *Watch against the prevailing of lusts and corruptions.* It is ordinarily experienced



rienced in the natural body: A foul stomach hath no appetite, or very little and teachy: noxious humours in the stomach blunt the edge of it to its proper food. It is as true to the soul, suffer pride, vanity of Spirit, any spiritual, or sensual lust, to prevail upon you, you will soon lose your appetite to spiritual things. Keep your soul clean from these things, and your appetite will be sharp.

6. *If you would keep your appetite to Divine Institutions*, improve them when you have them. Indigested meat corrupts the stomach, and takes off the edge of it. The reason for this is; This thirst after Ordinances, as it is first caused from an apprehended suitability in them to the souls needs, so it is encreased, by the souls experience of the truth of that apprehension. This it never hath without an improvement of the *Institution*: I mean such a ruminating upon it, such a digestion and application of it, as the soul may suck out the juice and vertue of it, and find that a Sermon is not to his soul, as a tale that is told, nor a Sacrament

Sacrament as a meer morsel of bread, and a draught of Wine. Would you keep alive your thirst after Divine institutions, when you have heard a Sermon, go sit alone, think of what you have heard, what truth you have been instructed in, and call to your souls to remember, and believe it, what sin you have been convinced of, and call again to your souls to consider it, and to avoid it. What duty you have been admonished of, and call to your souls to arise and do it.

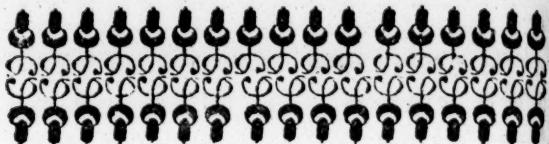
7. Lastly, *Beg this great blessing of God.* You beg, or should beg an appetite to your bodily bread, much more to your spiritual food. Christians, I doubt not, but in these times of spiritual scarcity, you beg Sermons of God, you beg Preachers of him who is the Lord of the Harvest. In this you do your duty, but let not this be all. Beg stomachs for your selves, as well as mouths for us. I am afraid it was too great a decay of this spiritual thirst, that brought on Gods dreadful voider, and brought the Wells of Salvation to so low a state, as you see them. If you could  
by

by begging of God recover your appetite again, I doubt not, but he *who feedeth the young Ravens when they cry*, would also hear and feed you : and in his Fatherly Providence so order it, that you should not have *Scorpions* instead of *Fish*, and *Stones* instead of *Bread*. Nor as the Spouse, be *smitten and wounded*, Can. 5. 7. and have your *vail* taken from you, by pretended *Watchmen*, whiles you are sick of love, and ask them in your distress, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth.*

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*FINIS.*

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Jer. 14. 19.

*Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?  
Hath thy soul loathed Zion?  
Why hast thou smitten us, and  
there is no healing for us? We  
looked for peace, and there is  
no good, and for the time of  
healing, and behold trouble.*



THE words I have read  
are agreed by all to be  
the words of the Pro-  
phet *Jeremiah*, he was  
one of those Prophets  
who prophesied last in  
*Judah*, before their carrying away into  
the seventy years Captivity of *Babylon*,  
chap. 1. 2. He prophesied in the days of

*Josiah,*

*Josiah*, and in the days of *Jehoiakim*, and so to the end of the *eleventh* year of *Zedekiah*, which was about forty years: He began to prophesie in the *thirteenth* year of *Josiah*, and prophesied *eighteen* years during the reign of *Josiah*; then *three months* during the reign of *Joachaz*, or *Jeconias*; and *eleven* years during the reign of *Jehoiachin*, a second son of *Josiah*; and *three months* more during the reign of *Jehoiachin*; and *eleven* years during the reign of *Zedekiah*. At what time he prophesied what we have in this chapter recorded is not expressed, probably before the death of *Josiah*. The particular judgment which God at this time had given him a prospect of, was a *Dearth*, as in *verse 1.* a dearth through want of *rain*, (as the *Hebrew* word signifieth) and so the Text maketh it plain, *verse 3.* *The Nobles sent their* *old men to the water, they came to the wells and found no water.* *verse 4.* *The land was chapt, there was no rain on the earth.* *ver. 7, 8, 9.* The Prophet on the prospect of this dreadful judgment, puts up a fervent prayer to

Jer. i. 2.

הבצרות

to

to God. To which the Lord returns an angry answer, *verse 10, 11, 12.* In short, he bids *Jeremiah* pray no more for them; for he would consume them by sword, famine and pestilence. As there is an acceptable day, a day when the Lord will be found, so there is a time when his Spirit shall no longer strive with man, his patience shall no longer be tired though *Noah, Daniel* and *Job* pray, they shall but deliver their own souls, the decree is gone forth. *Verse 13.* *Jeremiah* tells the Lord, that there were a breed of *Prophets* sang another tune to this sinful people, and told them they should have peace, and neither see sword nor famine. Thus *Jannes* and *Jambres* resisted *Moses*. Such wretches have been in all ages, when the Devil gets a commission to seduce a people to ruin, the instruments he useth to execute are profane, ignorant, lying Priests. This was the way, you know, Satan told God he would seduce *Ahab* to go and fall at *Ramoth-Gilead*. I will go, (said he) and be a lying spirit in the mouth of his Prophets.

*Verse 14.* The Lord tells *Jeremy*, these *Prophets*

phets were not of his sending, they  
prophefied *lies in his Name*, false visions,  
divinations, things of naught, the de-  
ceit of their own hearts: yet without  
doubt these were the generality of the  
*Jewish Ministers*; men brought up in  
the *Schools of the Prophets*; and in the  
orders of their Church, and cloathed  
with an external call to their works.  
Even under the Law God allowed his  
people a *judgment of discretion*, and did  
not oblige them to believe what their  
Priests said without any examination  
of it. It is possible *regular Priests and*  
*Prophets* may not be *sent by God*, nor  
ought people to look upon them so,  
when they find them speaking contrary  
to the Word of God. But Oh! it is a  
dangerous thing for the Ministers of  
truth to become the messengers of lies!  
For us to *corrupt the Word of God*. Dan-  
gerous it is to our selves. Tell these *Verse 15.*  
*Prophets*; (saith the Lord) *By sword and*  
*amine you shall be consumed*. It is dan-  
gerous for the people, *If the trumpet*  
*give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare*  
*himself to the battel?* If the Ministers  
say, *All is well, God is well pleased*; do  
N wickedly



Verse 16.

wickedly still, you do God good service in it. The interpretation be to the enemies of all good men. How easily are people hardened and encouraged in vile courses. But shall their Priests words save them? No. *The people (saith God) to whom they prophesie shall be cast out in the streets of Hierusalem, because of the famine and the sword, and there shall be none to bury them, their wives, their sons, and their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.* The lie of the Prophet never justifieth the credulity of the people. God expecteth that his people should search the Scriptures, and examine whether those things the Minister speaks be conformable to his Word or no; and yield no further assent to what they say, then what they find ground for there.

Verse 17.

18.

After this, God directeth the Prophet to act the person of a mourner before the people, upon a prospect of his judgments to come, as if they already were come. Oh! how loth the Lord is to destroy a people amongst whom he hath once had a Name! *How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?*

how

how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboiim? Jeremiah knowing he had to do with a gracious God, that sometimes repenteth himself of the evil he hath threatned, and brings it not upon a people, sets himself to prayer as the proper means ( if any would do ) to avert the vengeance of God.

His prayer begins with the words of my Text, and holds on to the end of the Chapter. In which you have,

1. *A fervent Expostulation, Hast thou utterly rejected Judah! hath thy soul loathed Zion! Why, &c.*

2. *A sad representation of the state of the people.*

1. *They were smitten, and there was no healing for them.*

2. *Their expectation was frustrated, We looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble.*

3. *Here is an humble though more general confession, We acknowledge our iniquities, and the iniquities of our fathers, for we have sinned against thee.*

4. *An earnest supplication, express'd*

in several terms, and back'd with several arguments, closely couched.

The Terms  
are,

1. *Do not abhor us.*
2. *Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory.*
3. *Remember. Break not thy Covenant with us.*

The Arguments are,

1. *For thy Names sake.*
2. *We are the throne of thy glory.*
3. *Thou hast made a Covenant with us.*
4. *Thou art he alone canst give showers, the vanities of the Gentiles cannot cause rain.*

5. Lastly, here is the Prophets declared resolution, to trust in God, and wait on him, verse 22.

My Text, as you see, contains only the two first general parts of this excellent Prayer of the Prophet.

The first. I called his fervent expostulation, *Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? Hath thy soul loathed Zion? Why hast thou*

thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us?

Hast thou in rejecting rejected, in reprobating reprobated *Judah*! Those that are critical in the *Hebrew*, observe the word signifies to reject a thing with scorn and disdain, as vile and contemptible; it is used (as in many other places). *Hos. 4. 6. Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee.*

דָּחַק  
דָּחַק

*Hos. 4: 6.*

*Lam. 5. 22. But thou hast utterly rejected*

*Lam. 5. 22.*

us. Lord, saith the Prophet, hast thou utterly rejected *Judah*? what *Judah*, the remainder of the people, the seed of *Abraham* thy friend, which was so dear to thee. *Judah*, of which it was said, *In Judah is God known*: hast thou utterly rejected this *Judah*? Hath thy cruel leathed *Zion*? The word used is

גָּעַלָהּ

much of the same signification with the other, only it signifieth something more of the affection set against an object: it is used, *Ezech. 16. 45. to express the alienation of a leud womans heart from her husband. It is also used,*

*Ezech. 16. 45.*

*Levit. 26. 44. a place to which one would think the Prophet here hath some special respect: And yet for all that,*

*Levit. 26. 44.*

when they be in the hand of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sake remember the covenant of their ancestors, &c. Very like the Prophet eyeing that promise in the Law, cries out, Hath thy soul loathed Zion? Zion, there's a great argument couched in that word. All the dwellings of Jacob were dear to the God of Jacob, but the Psalmist saith, God loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Zion was the name of a Mountain, at the foot of which Hierusalem, and in it the Temple stood; thence it is called the habitation of Gods holiness, his dwelling place, and it is put for the Church of God. Lord, saith the Prophet, this is Judah, against which thine anger smokes: hast thou utterly rejected Judah? There are but two Tribes and an half left of that people, whom thou chosest to draw nigh unto thee; hast thou rejected them, utterly rejected them? In this Judah is Zion thy Temple, the place which out of all

all the earth thou chofest for thy habitation, and in which above all thou didst delight; hath thy soul abhorred Zion! She was as thy Spouse, and thou lovedst her; doth thy soul now loath her? As to the form of the words, you see they are by way of *Interrogation*. Interrogations in Scripture sometimes adde force to *Affirmations* and *Negations*. Hath the Lord as great a pleasure in sacrifices, as in obeying his commandments? that is, *he hath not*. And so some would have it here: then the sense is this, Lord, I know thou hast not utterly rejected Judah, thy soul hath not abhorred Zion; which is true as to the spiritual part of his people. Hath God cast off Israel? (saith the Apostle) God forbid: *he hath not cast off the people whom he fore-knew*. But all are not Israel that are of Israel. Then the words have in them the force of an argument: Lord, I know thou hast not utterly cast off thy people, thy soul hath not abhorred them; therefore spare them as to this judgment. So he pleads from Gods certain spiritual love to a part of the people, formerly for the whole.

But I must confess I think this not the sense. *Interrogations* sometimes are the language of persons inquiring for further certainty and satisfaction: so I take it here, as if the Prophet had said, Ah Lord! is the decree gone forth? is there no hope? art thou not to be spoken to for this people? hast thou utterly reprobated them? If not, &c. It follows,

*Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing?* These words have in them an *Interrogation*, and an *Expostulation*. No soundness (in the Hebrew) Here the Prophet begins to represent unto God the state of the people. 1. They were smitten, already smitten with a dearth. 2. And in Gods purpose smitten with an approaching sword, and captivity. He owns God as the primary efficient cause, *Thou hast smitten*; he addes, *and there is no healing*. The word used in the Hebrew signifies *health* or *soundness*, and *healing* or *cure*. And so the complaint denotes two things. 1. The universality of the judgment, they had no part sound, no soundness. 2. The desirateness of their distemper, they could find



find *no cure*, no remedy, no healing, their *State Physicians* were of no value, they had tried, but they could no help, *no healing* : he Expostulates with God, not enquiring the cause : *Jeremiah* was not ignorant of cause enough in this people to justify God in the severity of this dispensation, but he speaks like a *troubled man*, who would gladly have had it otherwise with his people if God had pleased.

2. He further represents the sadness of this peoples case, in this, that their expectations were frustrated. *We looked for peace, and there is no good, and for the time of healing, and behold trouble.* There is nothing difficult in the words, they only signify the disappointment which God had given them in their great expectations. The words may be understood either of the generality of the people, who might have presumptuous hopes, or of Gods own people, who upon that great reformation which *Josiah* had began, look't for peace: both were deceived, no peace, no good came, but more trouble, more disturbance still : I intend not to speak  
to

to every Proposition might be drawn from these words. I shall only fix upon one, and that founded upon the words in the latter part of the Verse: *We looked for peace, and no good came, for the time of healing, and behold trouble.*

**Prop.** *It pleaseth God in the wisdom of his Providence, oft times to give people great disappointments, in their expectations of peace, and healing; as to their outward concerns.*

You may if you will take it in these two branches.

1. *People are very prone in evil times and disturbed times, to look for good, and to look for healing.*
2. *It pleaseth God oft times to give them great disappointments in their expectations. Trouble instead of peace, wounds instead of healing. I say,*
  1. *It is natural to us in evil and disturbed times to look for good, and to look for an healing.*

It is true, this Proposition is not universally verified in the Sons of men, and

the thing depends ( though not wholly, yet in a great measure ) upon the natural disposition. There is much truth in that Maxim of *Physitians* and *philosophers*, *Mores sequuntur humores*. Where any persons are more enclined to melancholly, and that humour more prevails, persons so enclin'd are more disposed to *fears*, and *jealousies*, and *suspicions*. Where some other humour prevails in the body, the person is more inclined to *hope*, and *presume* so as you shall generally find men and women thus divided. Some are more naturally disposed to fear the worst, to be *suspicious* and *jealous* of every thing : others are naturally enclined to *hope the best*, and to promise all good to themselves ; and the most of people, either from this Natural cause, or some *Moral causes* ( for they also have some influence on us ) are very prone to look for good, for *peace* and *healing* : and this is not only ordinary to the more ignorant and sinful sort of men : but even to Gods own people. The wicked cry *Peace, Peace*, when there is *no peace to the wicked*, saith the Lord. The Mother

ther of *Sisera* looks out at the window ( when her Son was dead with a nail struck through his temples ) and cries, *Why is his Chariot so long in coming ? Have they not sped ? Have they not divided the prey ?* The false Prophets daub with untempered mortar. Three hundred false Prophets spake good to *Ahab*, and bid him go up to *Ramoth-Gilead* and prosper. Nor are the better and wiser sort, Gods own dear people exempted from this infirmity. Even *David* saith in his prosperity, *I shall never be moved* : nor are we only vain in prosperity to promise our selves a stability in that state ; but in a time of adversity, we are as ready to promise our selves a quick deliverance and freedom from it. When the children of *Israel* were carried captives into *Babylon*, they would needs believe their deliverance should be speedy ; So as *Jeremiah* on purpose writeth a letter to them to take them off this vain conceit, *Jer. 29. 5. Build you houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. — And seek the peace of the City whither I have caused you to be*  
carried

carried captive. The matter needs no proof from Scripture, we find it true in all our experiences; that we are very prone to nourish up false expectations in our selves, and to promise our selves good. The error is common, the causes not difficult to be assigned, which are partly *Natural*, partly *Moral*.

1. For the natural cause I assigned it before. The most of peoples natural temper, as disposing them to wish good to themselves, so enclining them rather to hope the best, than to fear the worst: Hence you will observe, that all Christians are not thus mistaken, you shall find some of more sad, melancholick tempers, as much crying on the other hand, crying out like the Infidel in the Book of Kings (if they hear any talk of good) *If the Lord should make windows in Heaven, this could not be*: like *Thomas* they will believe nothing which they most desire without a sensible demonstration. But the moral causes of this may be assigned variously: and they are different according as the soul is which is thus affected. In wicked men,

2. The

2. The general moral causes are *presumption*, and looking at *second causes*.

1. I say in the first place *Presumption* an unjust assurance they give themselves of Gods favour toward them, and consequently, of his blessings upon them. There is an *Atheist* that believes no God at all, but thinks that all things fall out by chance; and so he is not concerned to regard a Deity; and it is no wonder, if he promises himself well. But those that will with their mouths own a Supreme Being and Moderator of all things, yet are too ready to promise themselves his favour, and consequently the blessings that attend it: The Lord foresaw this Generation, who when they heard all the Curses of his Law would bless themselves in their heart, and say, *they should have peace, though they walked according to the imaginations of their own heart, adding drunkenness to thirst.* Now this presumption in sinful men, either ariseth from *Atheism*, the persons not believing there is a God, or that he is not what he is; or *Unbelief*, not giving credit to the word of God; which said

Deut 29.

19.

The

There is no peace to the wicked. Or from Error, eying some particular sins, for which they will believe all the wrath of God is powred out upon them; or Eying some particular performances, which they think sufficient to reconcile God again to them, though before he was displeased with them: and when that sin which is all the guilt they can see is expiated or reformed; in those particular performances, which they lay all Religion upon are done, they look for good, and healing, when it may be in truth, those things which they so eye, do rather provoke God further, than at all abate of the wrath which he hath began to pour out, a probability this was the cause at this time in *Judah*. It is not exprest whether this Sermon of the Prophet was in *Josiah's* time, or in the time of his Sons. *Josiah* was a good Prince, he restored the true Worship of God, destroyed Idolatry, &c. His Sons restored There were unquestionably different complexions of this people. Some in *Josiah's* time expected good, and healing from his reformation: others ('tis like )



like ) in his Sons time expected the same from their restauration of former *Superstitions* and *Idolatry*. Both presumed *looking for peace, and there was no good, for healing, and behold trouble.*

2. The cause of Gods own peoples error in this kind is partly *Presumption*, partly *mistakes* concerning his *mind* and *promises*, partly, eying second causes too much. I say partly *Presumption*. Even the best of Gods people are ready to lay too much upon particular *reformations*, and *particular duties*. We are too ready to impute all punishments to some particular sins, and to lay all Religion upon some particular duties; and when those sins are reformed and expiated, and those *duties done*, we are ready to conclude all will be well, and presently to look for *peace* and *healing*.

2. Partly mistakes of Gods *mind* and *promises*. Godliness hath the promise of this life, and that which is to come. There are great promises, even of the good things of this life, made to the *Church of God in the general*, and to *believing souls in particular*; and God expecteth, that we should give credit to them

them, and wait in hope for them; but we are troubled with the Disciples curiosity, who came to our Saviour, and said, *Master wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* We are impatient, and know not how to wait, and thence are very prone to inform our selves (if possible) of the time, and too credulous to take ungrounded informations, and build up our hopes upon them. Hence our prying into dark Prophecies, and making various conjectures upon them, our listning so readily to such as will pretend to a skill in them, or to extraordinary Revelations, Visions and Impressions, and building up too great expectations upon our own concepts, or others dreams. What a late example have we had as to the year 1666. That must be the year when the *Jews* should be converted; *Rome ruined*, &c. What expectations were raised in many of that year, meerly (as it appears) from a mistake of the mind and Promises of God. The year is past, no such thing is brought to pass; *We looked for peace and healing, behold no good*, but trouble still.

O

3. Another

3. Another cause is, *Gods own people too much eying secondary causes.* The unbeliever layes all upon them; the Child of God layes too much upon them. Hence if he seeth such a position of them, as to the eye of his reason appears probable to produce some good effects to the Church and people of God, he presently concludes, all will be well; not attending to the power of the first cause as he ought to do, nor considering (as he ought) the guilt of the people, or the person for whom he would hope well, which may provoke God to lay a bar before second causes, that they shall not work according to our expectations.

But I have spoken enough to the first Branch; I come to the second, which is the Proposition as I laid down.

*God in the Wisdom of his Providence doth often give people great disappointments in their expectations as to outward peace and healing.*

I shall not need insist upon the proof of this, it is so plain in the Text; *We*  
*tooked*

looked (saith the Prophet) for peace, and behold no good, for healing, and behold trouble; and in our daily experience: To say nothing of vain persons, how often are the expectations of the most considerate sober sort of Christians frustrated concerning the publick; concerning their own private concerns. Concerning the publick; They look for reformation of disorders and abuses. Behold more corruption! They look for healing of breaches. Behold the Providence of God still follows them on with breach upon breach, and there is no healing. They looked for glorious times, they see sad and miserable times. That *de facto* this is true, cannot be denied; it will not be amiss for us to take a little pains, to enquire into the causes of it. These issues of Providence, having oft times but ill issues upon Christians faith and holiness.

1. It must first be laid down for a Principle, *That as no Evil, so not this Evil happeneth without Gods doing.* God hath an hand in these frustrations of our expectations.

2. It must also be acknowledged,  
O 2 that

Pfal. 9. 18. that God hath said, *The expectation of*  
 Prov. 10. *the poor shall not perish for ever.* It is  
 28. made as a curse upon the wicked,  
 Prov. 23. *That their expectation shall perish; They*  
 18. *shall be ashamed of their expectation; but*  
*the expectation of Gods people shall not be*  
*cut off.*

For the clearing of this little difficulty, you must distinguish,

1. Betwixt Gods peoples expectation for the fulfilling of the Promises of, and necessary to another life; and their expectation for the fulfilling of the Promises, relating to the *τα βιωτα*, or things which concern this life.

2. Betwixt *their warrantable and due expectation*, and *their irregular, and unwarranted expectation.*

3. Thirdly, Betwixt *their expectation of those good things*, and *their expectation of them, now or then, at this or such a time.* This being promised, the answer is easie.

1. The Expectations of the Saints, as to eternal life and salvation, shall not perish. This hope shall not make ashamed; no nor yet, as to such influences of grace, as are necessary in order unto it, they

they expect to be saved, and they shall be saved; to be sanctified yet more and more, and they shall be sanctified; to be preserved by the power of God through faith to salvation, and they shall be so preserved.

2. The expectations of the Saints, as to other good things, may fail as to circumstances of degree or time, but they shall not utterly fail. The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever, saith the Psalmist. Hath God promised his Church a time of peace and tranquillity? It shall have it, though it may be not in that year we expect it. Hath God promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church? and do they expect the fulfilling of this promise? It shall be fulfilled, their expectation shall not perish for ever. But if they will expect, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against any part of his Church, or any person of it, or that deliverance shall come to his Church in such a way, in such a year, by such means; here they may fail.

3. Finally, no regular expectation in Gods people of any thing, which be

*bath promised shall fail.* The reason is,  
 1. Because the Promise cannot fail: *Heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of what God hath promised shall fail.* 2. Because the expectation which God hath wrought in his peoples hearts, is the work of the holy Spirit, which cannot lie, nor teach his people to expect a lie. So then, the reason of the disappointments of Gods people in their expectations lieth in the error of their expectation. Now this error must be as to circumstances. For the Promises made to the Church, and the people of God in particular, being for all good things, they can be guilty of no error as to the thing expected, but with respect to circumstances, which may make things not in themselves simply and absolutely good, at this or that time to be evil.

The chief circumstances considerable in this case, are those of

Time.  
 Place.  
 Persons.  
 Means.

First,



First, The error may be in the circumstance of time. That God who hath plainly revealed his will as to a time when it shall go well with his people, when he will restore the Kingdom to Israel, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come, hath concealed the particular time when these things shall be. He that hath plainly said, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest on the back of the righteous*, hath not told us how long it may be on their backs. This hath opened a door for those who are too curious to be enquiring into the times and seasons which the Father hath reserved in his own power : and when they think they have found out something to guide them, they presently raise a great expectation upon it, and no wonder if they meet with a disappointment. The vision is yet for an appointed time, if they could have tarried, it would not have lyed ; but they could not wait for it, they made haste, and no wonder they have no good speed : no wonder they are disappointed, the promise is where it was, the word of God is not frustrated, only their mistimed expectations are disappointed.

This was doubtless the cause of the great disappointment in the year 1666. the things people looked for in that year shall most undoubtedly have a being, and be in their season brought to pass: *The Jews shall be called, Anti-christ shall be destroyed, the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and ( it is more than probable ) that the Church and people of God before the end of the world shall have a year of Jubilee.* Now many Christians, too too hasty and curious in search of secret things, desiring as the Disciples to know *when these things should be*; They search the Scripture, and finding a dark sentence, *Rev. 13. 18.* that the number of the beast was 666, conclude the year 1666 the particular year when God would at least begin to do these things.

2. A second error may be as to the circumstance of place. It is hard to fix promises to particular places. God of old had promised not utterly to reject his people Israel, ( which the Apostle interprets as to *Israel* in a spiritual sense, *the people whom he fore-knew, Rom. 9.* ) the people of Israel upon those promises expected

expected, that the *Tabernacle at Shiloh*, and afterwards the *Temple at Jerusalem*, should never be rased, nor the *City of Jerusalem*, and the *Nation of the Jews* never forsaken. And without all doubt many that feared God in that Nation, had some such strange expectations, and therefore under all judgments would still expect an help at last; God disappointed their expectations, yet failed not in his promise. Under the Gospel, Christ by his word hath secured his Church, *That the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*; now for people to apply this promise to this or that small part of the Universal Church, and to conclude, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church of God in England*, or in *Scotland*, or *Holland*, or the like, and to build an expectation suitably upon it, is unwarrantable. The *gates of hell*, which shall not prevail upon the whole Church, may prevail against this or that part of it, whose sufferings may be sad enough, and yet the promise not fail.

3. A third errour may be as to *Persons*, and that, 1. *As to persons that shall receive*

receive this mercy. 2. As to persons who shall be Gods instruments, in bringing about the desired mercy.

1. As to persons that shall receive the desired mercy. Promises, as to outward mercies, are more limited to the purity and holiness of a people, than those made as to spiritual and eternal good things. God hath said, *I will heal your backslidings, and God will save his people eternally,* (notwithstanding their backslidings) but for outward prosperity and felicity, it is no where promised to back-sliding and impure people. Supposing therefore a people that radically are good, and the Lords people, but a revolting back-sliding people, and continuing in their revoltings without repentance, if they build up expectations for the fulfilling of divine Promises as to outward prosperity and felicity, while their scum is not taken off, but boileth into them, they will most probably be disappointed.

2. As to persons who shall be Gods instruments in bringing about the mercy desired. And here let me only observe two things to you.

1. No great expectations can be build'd upon profane persons. I do not say, no great things for the good of Gods people may be done by them. I know Cyrus was Gods *servant*, to proclaim liberty to the Jews: and oft-times God hath made the *wrath* of men to praise him. Pharaoh shall keep the seed of Jacob alive, and provide for them in a time of famine.

But I say, expectations cannot be raised on these foundations: If the *Assyrian* doth Gods work, *howbeit* he meaneth not so, saith God. As the wise Faulkener maketh use of the ravenous quality of the Hawk to serve his turn, and make it get that for him which the Bird gat for it self; so the wise God will make use of an *Assyrian*, an *Egyptian*, a *Cyrus*, an utter enemy to his people, and make his selfish politick designs to serve his everlasting purpose; but here is no ground for Gods people to build expectations.

2. Nay, secondly, Be the persons never so holy that appear to us probable to do us good, no certain expectation can be raised upon them. Who would have thought

thought that *Moses* and *Aaron* should not have been Gods instruments to have carried his people over *Jordan*, and set their feet in *Canaan*; yet they did not, they sinned at the waters of *Meribah*, and so died on mount *Nebo*: holy men may fail, and provoke God to cut them off. So that to build expectations upon any particular persons, is to lay a foundation for our disappointments.

4. The fourth and last error may be as to *particular means*. It is true, God doth most of his works by *means*, but he wonderfully varies in the nature and kind of means he useth: sometimes he doth it by what we call *fair means*; sometimes by force, and what we call *saful means*. The people of *Israel* shall be delivered out of *Egypt* by the ruine of *Egypt*, yet not by sword and battel, but by plagues and the *Red-sea*. They shall be (by the sword) delivered from the *Canaanites*, they shall by a *Proclamation* of *Cyrus*, without any plague or sword be delivered from *Babylon*. Means which appear to us probable, possibly shall not do the work: what appears

to us improbable, and likely to work quite contrary, that shall do it. Oh the depth of the ways and judgments of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, how are his ways past finding out.

Thus I have, as shortly as I could, opened the Proposition to you: I shall now come to the application of it.

1. *Is not this Scripture this day fulfilled in your ears? May not we in our addresses to God, say, O Lord, hast thou utterly rejected England? hath thy soul loathed thy Church there? Why are we smitten and there is no healing? We looked for peace, and there is no good; for healing; and behold trouble. That God deal with us as a people rejected and loathed, is apparent. Our Fathers are gone, our Prophets, where are they? We see not our signs, nor is any Prophet to tell us how long? We have defiled the Sanctuary of the Lord polluted, his Ordinances defiled; we have despised our Sabbaths mocked at: The Lord hath covered the Daughter of our Zion with a cloud in his anger, and not remembered his foot-stool in the*



the day of his wrath. As to our Civil concerns, *How doth the City sit solitary that was full of people, how is she become a widow? She that was great amongst the Nations, and Princeſſ amongst the Provinces.* May not we ſay, *Why are we ſmitten, and there is no healing?* Are not we ſmitten in our ſpiritual things? yea, and with a dreadful ſmiting too. Have we that preaching, thoſe Sacraments, that communion of Saints, which we formerly had? Have we thoſe convictions and conversions of ſouls unto God, thoſe mournings under the Word of God, ſuch affected hearts as formerly? I am ſure I ſpeak to thoſe who know we have not. We ſee not the Word of God go forth with that power and life, to rouse up ſecure ſouls, to convince and to change the hearts of ſinners; to ſtrengthen, confirm and comfort the wearied ſouls of Gods people as formerly. We are full of dead, ſapleſs, dry, unprofitable diſcourſes in Pulpits; but where's the power of the Lord in his Ordinances? where are the weeping eyes, where are the trembling ſouls we have formerly known? when

are the cries of them we have formerly  
heard, *Men and brethren, what shall we  
do to be saved?* This is a smiting, (bre-  
thren) and a dreadful smiting too: it  
is true, it is not in the most *sensible*  
part to the generality of people, (the  
*Gadarenes* you know came, and be-  
sought our *Lord* to go out of their  
Country) they have not now so many  
sermons to disquiet them in their beds  
and lust, and make their heads to ache;  
but to them that *fear God*, and truly  
understand and judge of the interest of a  
Nation, it is, I say, a dreadful smiting,  
and that in the tenderest part, and pos-  
sibly the cause of other smittings too.  
But are not we smitten in our persons?  
We men will not believe they have souls,  
yet they know they have bodies. Hath  
not God smitten us with a dreadful  
plague, not parallel'd either in our days,  
or the days of our fore-fathers? Hath  
not God smitten us both in our persons  
and estates with a *consuming War*, and  
since that with a *dreadful Fire*, hardly  
to be parallel'd in any modern story?  
And is there yet any healing for us?  
Again, May we not say, We looked for  
peace,

*peace, and no good; for healing, and behold trouble? Did not we in the year 1660 look for good, for peace, upon that miraculous revolution, but did any good come? instead of it all these dreadful judgments of God have succeeded. Did not we again the last year upon the peace with our neighbours look for good, did not we look for prosperity, freedom of trade? have we seen ought of it? or ought answering our expectations? What shall we say to these things? How hath God disappointed us in all our expectations? Nay rather, what shall we do in this day of perplexity? Let us, first, Examine, whether we be under such circumstances, as we can regularly and warrantably expect that God should smile upon us, and fulfil those promises for temporary good things which he hath made in his Word to his people. And, 2. accordingly as we find our state, let us be persuaded to apply our selves to our duty.*

Under these two heads I shall bring whatsoever I shall speak by way of application of this Doctrine.

*Use I.*

First, Let us examine whether our circum-

circumstances be such as we can warrantably expect any *good*, any *peace*, any *healing*. And here we must distinguish betwixt, 1. the *generality of the Nation*: and, 2. *Gods peculiar people* in the *Nation*. As to the former I must confess my heart is sad, he that looks upon all orders of persons in the Nation, will find them wallowing in such guilt, as I fear it will be hard to produce an instance of any Nation under heaven that ever was under the rod, and let go, no better reformed. What prodigious unheard of wickednesses have been, and are committed every day? what murders? what prodigious lusts? what horrible swearing and cursing? what Sabbath-breaking? what injustice, oppression do we hear of, and see every day? Never was the holy Name of God so prodigiously blasphemed, never such oaths, such curses as we hear in our streets; never did those that desire to walk godlily meet with more scoffs, derisions, hard speeches, and harder actions; never *Religion* made so much the scoff and *jeer* of those that understand it not. We may if we will

P (under

( under these circumstances ) look for peace, but if any good come ; we may look for healing, but if we see not trouble, yea, and one trouble like one wave upon another ; we are certainly mistaken in calling the Scriptures the word of God, *Jer. 7. 9. Will you steal, murther, commit adultery, and swear falsely, &c. and come and stand before me, &c.* Do men think all the day long to make the streets ring with the cries of oaths, curses, blasphemies, noises of drunkards, groans of widows and fatherless : and then make amends for all with an Anthem, and Lesson on the Organs, and hearing or reading prayers at Mattens and Evensong. Oh horrible vanity ! O prodigious ignorance of the nature and mind of God ! Will their egg-shells wipe your filthy mouthes clean enough think ye ? No, no. Sirs, be not deceived, God is not mocked. God may bring us good and peace sometimes, *pœnalis nutritur impunitas*, in further vengeance : he doth not punish the Israelitish daughters when they commit whoredom, nor their wives when they commit adultery. But it were strange for  
him

him, having his rod taken out, to lay it up again while we are no better. Sure I am, under these circumstances (what ever a gracious God may do) we can expect no good.

What shall I say for the seven thousand in *England*, who have not bowed their knee to Baal, nor kissed him with their lips, those whom God hath kept from the pollutions of these evil times, and the general debaucheries of their neighbours. May they look for any good? may they expect any healing, and not suspect any disappointment? Truly as to them I know not well what to say; God hath kept them from being involved in the generality of the National guilt, and hath kept up their hearts for him and his Ordinances in a time of great defection and back-sliding. This speaketh well.

But yet, 1. I cannot tell how far God may have been provoked with the former sins of Professors.

2. Though they must be in a great measure acquitted from the idolatry and superstition, swearing, cursing, blaspheming Gods holy Name, impudent

*Sabbath-breaking, mocking and jeering at Religion, murders, thefts, unlawful lusts, oppressions, injustice, perjuries of the Nation: yet with them, even with them sins may be found against the Lord their God, which how long they may keep their wounds from healing I cannot tell. Let me propound a few questions to you that fear God, and would look for peace and healing.*

*I. Have you peace one with another, and are the breaches amongst your selves healed? How should we expect the world should be at peace with us, who cannot be at peace without selves? What can we look for less than that the great Shepherd of the sheep should make use of dogs to worry us, and drive us together, while we can bite and devour one another? Are the world and you, think you, nearer a kin than you are to your brethren? Can you expect God should make his enemies to be at peace with you, when you cannot be at peace each with other? If the Lambs cannot lie down together, how can you expect the Lions should lie down with the Lambs? You know next to*

*Christ*



Christs precept, *Have salt in your selves,* was that, *Have peace one with another.* Certainly that distance in *affection* and *communion* which true Christians kept at one from another, was not the least of the provocations which hath made God angry with them all. I instance not *differences in opinion*; there must be such, there will be such, till we all see in a clearer light than this world affords: but I say, *distances in affection* first. I thank God I have learned, that *difference in judgment* in things not necessary to be believed in order to salvation, is no more justifiable cause to me for distance of affection from my brother, than the difference of his countenance from mine is. I say further, *distance in communion*. That the members of the same body, and under the same head, should refuse communion with other, is certainly a strange disorder. Do Gods Ordinances belong to Christians with reference to their several forms, I wonder, or as they are all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Certainly *faith in Christ*, evidenced by an holy life, intitleth any Christian to communion

with those who profess the same faith, and live the same life. Christians, is this wound healed? I bless God I think it is in a great measure; but Oh that it did not bleed at all,

2. *Have you sufficiently mourned and been humbled for former wantonness under Ordinances.* We have had times of great liberty for preaching and enjoyment of Gods Ordinances; have you not forgotten how you plaid with your wholesome food in those days? how hardly it went down? if you fancied the least errour in the Cookery, if the sauce was not more pleasing to you than your meat. One Minister was thought by some too Legal, another it may be judged by another partly too Evangelical. Are not you glad of the gifts and parts of those godly Ministers, which heretofore were despicable in your eyes? Have you mourned for this wantonness?

3. Since the hand of God hath been against you, *have you not been more ready to quarrel with God, or at least to rage against instruments, than to be angry with your selves for the deserving cause of these*  
judg-

*judgments?* If you have, God hath not yet attained his end upon you; the *rottenness*, the *proud flesh* is still in the wound, which must be eaten out before you can reasonably look for cure. It was well said of the Church in the *Lamentations*, *Let us search and try our ways; and turn again unto the Lord.* If Ephraim saith once, *What have I done?* God will quickly say, *Is Ephraim my dear child?* The end of Gods afflicting his people, is their turning, humbling themselves, and acknowledging of their offences.

Lam. 3 40.

4. *How have you walked with God in the time of your sufferings?* Have you been a Law unto your selves, whiles the rod of Discipline hath not been drawn out against you? have you *walked orderly?* Little could be seen as to your walking in communion, but how have you walked in your families? how have you kept up your private communion with God? what have you been in your houses, in your closets? By the answer which your consciences (secretly examine) shall give to these Interrogatories, you may know much

whether you may warrantably look for peace and good, *yea or no.*

*Use 2.*

But, secondly, If you may look for it, yet *take heed how you look, that you may not meet with disappointment.*

1. Do not in your expectations prescribe to God, either as to *time*, or as to *persons*, or as to *means*. He that hath promised his people deliverance, hath not the certain time of it. The case was otherwise with the Jews, God had told them, they should be in captivity just seventy years. Mercy comes always best in its season : God knows times better than we, and hath reserved the knowledge of times to himself. Trusting in God upon the credit of his word, and waiting for him, are things highly acceptable unto him ; but *limiting of him* is as much dishonourable to God. It is ten to one but he who thus *limiteth* the Lord, will be disappointed. God will convince us, that particular times is a secret we cannot find out : and it is a very ill influence which ordinarily disappointments of our expectation in this kind have upon us. That's a good Christian that  
steadfastly

Redfastly believeth the matter of the Promise, and patiently waiteth upon God for the fulfilling of it till his good time come. . It is a sad effect that some mens giddy confidence upon the year 1666 hath produced. Some have acted since, as if, because God failed their expectation in that circumstance, he were henceforth to be believed and trusted no more. Take heed of such an error as this.

2. Let not your *expectations* either hinder your *prayers*, or make you more unfit for a *continuance of sufferings*. None can build an *infallible expectation* of good in the *outward concerns of this life*, ( I mean sensible good ) for any particular Church, nor for any particular person: Gods own people may have so sinned, that as to temporal judgments he will not pardon them. The Nation ( of which they are a small part ) may have sinned to such a height. Indeed were we never so certain, yet our expectation should not hinder prayer: Holy *Daniel* taught us this, he never prayed more heartily than when he understood by books that the time of the captivity

captivity was just expiring. True faith never hinders prayer, ( it is the Midwife that helps the mercy unto light.) And take heed that your expectation doth not discompose you as to further sufferings: An ungrounded expectation of deliverance from an evil under which we groan, doth often make us very unfit to bear it longer than the expected time of delivery.

3. If your expectation be frustrated, blame your selves, but take heed of accusing God. Let God be true, though every man be found a liar. It is most certain God deceiveth none, themselves deceive themselves. It is blasphemy in the heart to say, *God can lie*. There is no harm of thy owning thy self mistaken.

4. Expect nothing from vile persons, nor by vile means. It is true, God hath often made use of Pagans, and profane men, and the sins and corruptions of his people, and of others, as means to bring forth his glorious works in the world; but these are matters for our admiration, not objects for our expectation. The fulfilling of Gods promise can be regularly expected in none, but in Gods way.

5. Suspect

5. *Suspect all thy expectations, whiles thou findest in thy own heart, or in the hearts of others, whom thou lookest upon as dear to God, a prevalency of corruptions.* I have before given you the reason of this, God may deliver a people that have revolted, but an instance cannot be given, nor a promise named for Gods delivering a people, justifying their revolting, and continuing in it.

6. *Expect not much in a course of probabilities.* The reason of this lies in Gods usual deliverances of his people, which have been upon the greatest improbabilities; Out of Egypt and Babylon, when one would have thought there had been least likelihood. The cry of the Bridegrooms coming usually is at midnight. There's most ground of a spiritual believing hope, when there is visibly no hope. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.*

7. Let thy expectation of outward good be proportioned to the promise of it, in which is always to be understood a reservation to God's wisdom. All is not good that we think so. Thy expectation cannot fail if it be commensurate



mensurate to the promise; if it be not, it hath no foundation to stand upon, and can have no certainty. Remember that in all promises of this nature the judgment of the *particular goods* whether under *present circumstances* it be so or no, belongs unto God. Expect deliverance from evils of this nature, and the collation of good of this nature, if God in his wisdom seeth it good for thee, or that part of his Church wherein thou art. But a further expectation, it is more than I know if any promise will allow thee.

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F I N I S.

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A N

# APPENDIX

To the foregoing

## DISCOURSES.

O R,

An Addition of some necessary and reasonable Directions to Christians, in order to firmer perseverance in their profession, and better observance of Divine Institutions.

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*By the same Author.*

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Gal. 6. 16.

*And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*

Revel. 3. 10.

*Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

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Printed in the Year 1668.

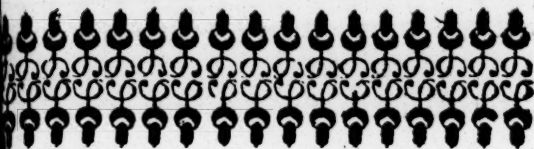


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*The joint advice of some Ministers  
of the Gospel to their People, for  
the reviving the Power and Pra-  
ctice of Godliness, especially in  
Families, and the propagating  
the Knowledge and Fear of God  
in those Societies.*

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*Dearlly beloved Brethren,*



**W**E being Ministers of the  
Gospel, who have  
formerly received a  
charge of some of  
your souls, knowing  
how great the con-  
cernment of Gods glory in the preserva-  
tion of Religion, and the propagation  
of it in the power thereof is; and having  
observed some decays thereof in present  
Professors, from the life, zeal, and  
power

power thereof in our fore-fathers : and withall how many temptations are daily offered to the corruption which yet remaineth in the best, to divert them from the streight and narrow way which leadeth to the Kingdom of God. That through our negligence, the study and powerful practice of godliness ( wherein *England* hath been famous above any other sort of Christian people ) may not abate, and Religion evaporate into a meer formality ; and the souls of you, our Brethren, might not be hindred of that joy and peace which usually attendeth a strict and close walking with God, have thought fit to propose our serious thoughts unto you, for the revival and preservation of Religion, wherein we shall rather give you a copy of the conversation of our fathers, who walked with God in their generation, than propound any new thing unto you.

There are three things in Religion observed as the glory of *England*, wherein our Church hath exceeded other Reformed Churches.

1. *The diligent practice of Family-Worship.*
2. *The*

2. *The strict sanctification of the Christian Sabbath.*

3. *The severe personal strictness in the Conversation of Professors.*

And as these things have been the beauty of *England*, so we doubt not but they have been the strength of it.

We therefore as Ministers of Christ do beseech you ( and so much the rather, by how much our condition in respect of publick communion is more sad than in former times ) that you would joyn with us in your particular places, so much as in you lies, to recover unto God an *England*, that antient *Revenue of his glory*, which he hath formerly had from our fathers in these things.

1. The first thing which we commend unto you is the promoting of *Family Religion*, and that both in reference to the *week-day*, and to the *Lords day*. *Families* are the lowest Societies, and such wherein we have further advantages to propagate Religion, than in any others, and that not only in respect of our daily converse in them, but of the authority with which God hath

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there

there cloathed superiours. They are the *Societies* in which alone every private person (who is the Head of the family) is a *King, Priest, and Prophet*. And *he that cannot rule his own house well*, is by the *Aposle* determined unfit to rule the *Church of God*. In order to which we propound,

1. That every one who is Head of a family would by a constant deportment to his or her children or servants, vindicate the honour which God in the Fifth Commandment hath reserved for him; neither by too much familiarity, divesting himself of his authority; nor by too much severity, estranging the hearts of his Relations from him; but by a wise gravity so deporting himself, that while his relations fear him, as being in the stead of God unto them: they may also love him for his tenderness to them, both in their temporal and eternal concerns. In order to which we desire Christians to consider, That he or she is rarely dishonoured by his child or servant, who have not by too low and unhandsome carriage dishonoured themselves before them; God ordinarily vindicating

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cating the honour of superiours, till themselves have unduly prostituted it; that they may read their sin in their punishment.

2. That being cloathed with this authority from God, *you would make it your business to vindicate his glory*, not enduring any in your families, who after due *admonition*, and the use of other means to reclaim him or her, shall live in the practice of any *moral vice*, or what shall have an evident appearance of it. If any therefore in your families shall be given to *drinking, swearing, lying, prophaning the holy Name of God, reviling of his people, any species of uncleanness, or any other scandalous sin*, (if they be such as you can turn away) if they will not be reclaimed, remember the resolution of David, *Psal. 101. 6, 7.* If they be such as either by *natural obligation*, or *moral contract* you are obliged to keep, let it be your business to endeavour all possible ways, by *instruction, admonition, correction*, begging the help of others to reclaim them, that their sins may not be laid to your charge. Consider with what face he can blame

*The Advice of some Ministers*

the Magistrate for not punishing these offences, who neglecteth it in his own family, where the body to be ruled is less, and his authority, as to some kind of punishment, far greater than the Civil Magistrates is. And as a means in order to this we desire,

That giving your children and servants all due liberty of recreation, especially with such company as you shall commend to them, *you would restrain them, as much as may be, from Plays, Fairs, Meetings for Dances and other Revels, and from Recreation at undue hours.*

3. That seeing *an ability to read the Scriptures*, and other good Books, is the foundation of all knowledge, you would not only see *to the bringing up your children to this capacity*; but if the providence of God casts any under your roof that cannot read, *you would exhort, encourage, and by all means help them till they attain this faculty.* What knoweth the Master, but he may thus be a means to save the soul of his servant, by bringing him to the knowledge of God? We urge this rather, because we observe  
divers

divers well disposed persons grown up, miserably disadvantaged for the want of this.

2. The family being thus ordered and disposed, *is prepared for a joint communion with God.* And surely, if there were no Scriptures evincing *Worship*, a family-duty, such as that of *Joshua*, resolving *with his house* to serve the Lord. *Cornelius*, *fearing God with his whole house*, and praying there *about the ninth hour of the day.* *Dauids walking in his house in a perfect way.* *Abrahams instructing his household.* The Prophet *Jeremy's* imprecation upon the families which call not on the name of the Lord. The mutual prayers of husband and wife, which the Apostle hinteth that he would not have hindred. *Daniels* praying in his house thrice a day, (which we cannot tell how it should have been proved against him, had he done it alone.) We say, that were there none of these evidences from holy Writ, yet every Christians reason can tell him, that the providence of God hath cast us into family societies, not meerly for natural and civil ends, but for to be joynt

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blessings

1 Pet. 3:7.

blessings each to other in those things which he hath commanded us first to seek.

Now if any desire to be more particularly instructed concerning those duties which God expecteth from families, we answer,

We know no act of divine Worship but may be performed in so small a society as that of a family, if a lawfully ordained Minister be the Head of it, or assumed into it for that time. But we shall only speak to those duties which God expecteth of every family, without any respect to a Minister in it, &c. Those we conceive are reducible to four heads.

1. *Reading in the Book of the Lord.*

2. *Prayer.*

3. *Praise.*

4. *Instruction.*

1. *For reading the holy Scriptures.* That this is a family-duty doth appear from that of Moses, *Deut. 6. 6, 9.* where we are commanded to have the Law of God wrote upon our posts, and the gates of our house. From that of the Apostle, *Col. 3. 16.* *Let the word of Christ dwell*

*dwell in you* ; ( a Metaphor drawn from members of Families which dwell together ) For the further proof of this duty we commend you to an excellent Book, called *Family Religion further revived*, by Mr. Philip Goodwin, Printed at London, 1655. and to a Book of Mr. Whites, for the profitable reading of the Scriptures, Chap. 9.

2. For Prayer : We are commanded to pray *always*, and who so considereth that the Law of God requireth it of single persons ; and of the first and least society , that of a man and his Wife , 1 Pet. 3. 7. cannot think , 1 Pet. 3. 7. that a man is excused from it with his children and servants. It is the blessing with which the Superiours in families ought to bless their inferiours.

3. For Praise ; by singing of Psalms. As praising of God is a natural duty ; so the doing of it by Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs ( which are the three titles of the Psalms of David ) is commanded by the Apostle. In the same place where God saith, *I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my* Col. 3. 16.

people, Jer. 31. 1, 2. he also, ver. 7. saith  
*Shout with joy, and sing amongst the Na-  
 tions.*

4. *Instruction is a general duty.* God commendeth *Abraham* for it, Gen. 18. 17. For the matter of it; in our present discourse it is In the things of God. Now this may be done several wayes;

1. *By Catechizing*; which is by experience found the most plain and familiar way of teaching, and that by which the *Papists* confess, the *Protestant Religion* hath been highly advantaged in the world. We therefore urge this in a more especial manner upon all the heads of families, as the nearest way to bring those under their roof to the knowledge of God; and the establishing of them against the errors of the sinful times wherein they live.

2. *By repeating of Sermons to them*; an antient and profitable duty, wherein every Christian is a fellow-worker with, and a preparer of the work of the Holy Spirit of God, whose work it is (saith our Saviour) *To bring to remembrance the things we have heard of God.*

God; By opening the word of God read unto our families, (which though it be not a work to which every private Christian is fit, yet may be profitably performed, if any Christian will but take the pains to spend a little time before duty in fitting himself for it) by reading the *Annotations* upon the Chapter, or any of those profitable Notes wrote by Mr. *Ainsworth* on the five Books of *Moses*: Mr. *Jackson* upon all the *Historical Books of Scripture*: Mr. *Dickson* upon the *Psalms*: Mr. *Calvin* on *Job*, and *Deuteronomy*, and *Daniel*: Dr. *Willet* on *Genesis*, *Exodus* and *Leviticus*: Mr. *Hutchinson* on the *small Prophets*: Mr. *Dickson* on *Matthew*: Mr. *Hutchinson* on *John*: Mr. *Fergusson* on *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and many others.

4. By occasional discourses of Religion, and applying Scripture unto our relations, according to the Precept, *Deut. 6. 6, 7, 8, 9.*

5. By examining their children and servants what they remember, upon hearing Chapters read, or Sermons preached, or repeated.



2. Particularly we commend unto Christians, *A more extraordinary care to inform their families, concerning the true Nature of Worship in general, concerning the several acts of Gospel Worship, and the right way and method of performing of them, as well the external, as internal manner, by which means they will not only be armed against temptations to Superstition and Will-Worship which is abomination to the Lord; but also kept from a formal, and perfunctory, slighty service of the great, and living God. And the better to enable Christians to do this, we do by the blessing of God intend to contribute our pains to the utmost in some exercises of this nature.*

3. If any one ask us, how often these duties are to be performed? We answer, that we have in this no stated rule: but as we are sure, they cannot be too often; and reason teacheth, that they should be so often, as to reach their ends. So the Scripture doth not obscurely hint some kind of *Instruction and Prayer* to be used *Morning and Evening*, Deut. 6. We are commanded to

talk

talk to our children of the Law of the Lord, when we lye down, and when we rise up: God of old required a Morning and Evening Sacrifice. David, Psal. 55. 17. and Daniel, Chap. 6. v. 10. prayed thrice a day which possibly may hint to us, that those who have more leisure from the world than others, ought to spend more time than others in this worship: But we should press upon our Brethren,

1. That none of them would omit praying and reading the Scriptures, or some other way of instructing their families, twice each day, viz. in the morning and evening. The morning is an excellent time;

1. Because no excuse can be for the omitting it; It may be done, and is fittest to be done, before the world calleth us off.

2. It is the time when our spirits are most refreshed and fit for duty, when worldly occasions have not seized on our thoughts.

3. We are bid to say, *Prosper thou the works of our hands upon us*, and that is the time when the works of our hands begin.

4. It

4. It is commended to us by many Scriptures, *Psal.* 5. 3. *Psal.* 59. 16. *Psal.* 88. 13. *Psal.* 92. 2. *Psal.* 119. 147.

• The Evening is also a proper time.

1. To beg pardon for the sins of the day, and to give thanks for the mercies of the day, and to beg the Protection and sleep of the night.

2. The work of our hands is done, and it is reasonable to beg Gods blessing upon it.

3. Our sleep is the image of death, and many never rise from their beds, it is reasonable we should therefore commend our spirits, and the spirits our of relations to the Lord.

4. It is commended in Scripture, *Psal.* 141. 2. *Psal.* 55. 17.

2. That if possible these constant duties may be performed, before we be disadvantaged for them. Either, 1. By intermeddling with the world; or, 2. By inclinations to rest and sleep; which usually make the performance of religious duty late at night, or after supper, a very slightly perfunctory serving of God.

3. Thirdly,

3. We commend the *Reading of the Scripture*, repeating a *Sermon*, or singing of a *Psalm* before prayer; not only as duties in themselves, but as excellent means, to call home the thoughts, prepare the heart, and fix the mind to a more steady contemplation of God, and devotion toward him in prayer.

4. We commend to our brethren, the repeating of *Sermons*, and *Catechizing* to be at least once performed every week, besides on the *Lords Day*.

5. For singing of *Psalms*; It is proper for the *Sabbath*, but never out of season; we leave that and occasional instruction of families out of the *Scripture* to private Christians, as God shall give them opportunities, and an heart thereunto. Only commending them as duties fit to be sometimes done, and not wholly omitted by any.

2. Having thus far offered you our thoughts for the *Family-Worship* of every day; We come in the next place, to commend to you the special sanctification of the *Lords day*: where we shall not speak to the more publick solemn sancti-

*sanctification* of it, but keep our selves within the bounds of the private house.

We know our Brethren understand, that by the fourth Commandment God hath reserved a seventh part of our Time to himself: That what should be the seventh part, under the old dispensation of the Covenant to the Jews, was determined by God to be the seventh day from the Creation: That our seventh part is determined by the practice of the Apostles, who were wont to meet and sanctifie the first day of the Week, counting the seventh from our *redemption*, when the world was as it was created anew.

That we are tied to the sanctification of this day by the fourth Commandment, none can doubt; but he must question whether there be ten Commandments, or no; or whether the fourth be a Moral Law. Nor can any sound reason be given, why the fourth Commandment should not concern Christians, as much as any of the other nine.

Hence it is plain, that it must be kept

kept as a day of holy rest from labour and recreations, at other times lawful: and to spiritual services publick and private.

These being the confessed general duties of Christians, as to the sanctification of the Sabbath, we shall only offer some Propositions for particular practice, in reference to these general ends.

1. *That all heads of families take care, that no kind of civil labour necessary to be done, which can be done before, be left to be done in any part of the Sabbath:* For no work can be justified on the Sabbath, as a work of Necessity, which though necessary to be done, might yet have been done before that day cometh.

2. *That all Christians would endeavour, but those especially whose callings in the world, do not so much hinder them; the Evening before the Sabbath, to direct their family-duty as much as they can, both as to Instruction and Prayer, to prepare the several persons of their family, for the Sabbath.*

3. *That all heads of families would*  
take

take care, that on the Morning of the Sabbath, they, their children and servants rise up from their beds, either as soon as on other dayes, or at least so soon, that the necessary business of the family may be dispatched, and family duties performed before they go to the publick service.

4. That those of their families who are not employed in any necessary work of the family, whiles all the rest be ready, employ their time (being once ready) in reading the Scriptures, or other good Books.

5. That the heads of families so order the rising of their families that morning, that they may have full time to do their household necessary business, and also to attend family duties. In which we conceive it is the duty of Christians that day, to spend some more time than on other dayes; because it is a day wholly dedicated to the Lord.

6. We commend to our brethren, as part of their family duty, that morning to instruct their families in the Nature of Worship, the several acts of it. The true manner, both of the outward and inward performance. The morality of the Sabbath,

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*bath, the true way of sanctifying of it. To which purpose we recommend to them Mr. Sheppards Treatise of the Sabbath, clearing the morality, and Mr. Bernards threefold Treatise of the Sabbath.*

*6. After the publick service in the morning, and dinner ( which we think that day should be moderate ) we recommend to our brethren ( if they have time ) the calling of their family together, repeating the Sermon heard to them, or examining them about it, and prayer, and the like we again recommend to them after Evening Sermon, and before Supper.*

*7. We commend singing of Psalms to our Brethren as a special duty of the Sabbath, we find that David composed Psalm 92. on purpose for the Sabbath. We desire that our Brethren would not omit it, at least to do it once every Lords Day.*

*8. Finally, We beseech our Brethren, that they take especial care of all within their gates on the Lords Day; that they profane not the Sabbath by unnecessary work, sleep, or recreations. It is a day of rest, but of holy rest : A day of rest,*  
*R and*

and therefore profaned by labour that is worldly and unnecessary. *An holy rest*, and therefore profaned by excessive sleeping ( which is natural rest ) idleness or recreations, which are but a Civil rest.

3. Having thus far offered to our Brethren our thoughts in reference to their families, we conclude with a word or two in reference to their personal conversation.

1. We suppose our Brethren *conscientious in matters of Justice*, to remember to do ( in their callings ) to all, as they would be done to; to take heed of all gross, and scandalous evils, and shall only mind them of some things which God requireth of them, wherein they are to do more than others, as having received more from God, and being under a more special Covenant and Obligations, as also of some duties specially to be practiced, with reference to these times, wherein ( if ever ) Christians are by the Providence of God called out to a more *winning conversation*, and to a more *prudent conversation*, fulfilling that of our Saviour,

our, Be you wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves.

1. In reference to the first, *We seriously commend to our brethren,*

1. *Private prayer in their closets according to our Saviours precept, Mat. 6.6. (at least to be performed once every day.)*

2. *Private reading the Scriptures:* the example of the Eunuch, *Acts 8.* shews how much God hath owned it, and is pleased with it.

3. *Private self-examination, 2 Cor. 13.5. Psal. 4. 4.*

4. *Private Meditation commended, Gen. 24. 63. Josh. 1. 8. Psal. 1. 2. Psal. 63. 6. Psal. 119. 15, 23, 48, 78, 148. Psal. 104. 34. Psal. 119. 97. If Christians would be particularly instructed in this duty, we commend them to Mr. Joseph Symmonds; Three excellent Treatises Printed at London, 1653. one of which is upon this subject.*

2. As to the prudent conversation of Christians, and something of their farther duty in these times; we recommend to our Brethren,

1. *As much as in them lyes, to avoid all*

meetings of people at feasts, or otherwise: Where they foresee they may probably be engaged in discourses, which will either tempt them to any thing that is sinful, or to discover their opposition to such courses of others, in a place where probably their speaking will but make them odious.

2. *As it is their duty at all times to do good to all ( though ) more especially to those of the household of faith. And to love their enemies, to do good to them that hate them, &c. So more especially to be careful of it in these times. That whereas*  
*men speak evil of them, as evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ: yea, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of visitation.*

1 Pet. 3. 16.

1 Pet. 2. 12.

3. That above all, even to the worst men, They render their dues, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour, owing no man any thing, but to love one another; and remembring, that Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, according to that of the Apostle, Rom. 13. 7, 8.

4. That they do not give holy things to  
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Dogs, nor cast pearls before Swine, but wisely watch all advantages, where they may meekly, and acceptably, and seasonably apply any word to their neighbour, to convince him of any sin; or duty, forbearing it where they see any in any madness of passion, or the like.

5. That if God calleth them to suffer any thing in the doing of his will, they remember to do it, with meekness and patience; and also with Christian courage and boldness, committing themselves to him that created them, and who will judge righteously.

6. That they Remember their Brethren who are in bonds; as if they were bound with them; considering that themselves also are in the body, Heb. 13. 3. Hebrews 10. 34. Coloss. 4. 18. Phil. 1. 7.

7. That if they discern any of their Brethren overtaken in a fault, they would endeavour to restore such a one in the Spirit of meekness, considering themselves also lest they be tempted; according to that, Gal. 6. 1. and if need be, they further acquaint some godly Ministers with it.

8. That ( especially at such a time as this is ) they cover and conceal the weaknesses of each others ; and avoid all manner of exceptions one against another, or reproaches of each other for any particular differences of persuasion in the things of Religion, as to such who are agreed in the two main things. 1. The Doctrine of faith : 2. A joint study to promote practical Godliness.

9. That they take especial heed, that no particular provocations from any of their brethren upon civil accounts, be a temptation to them to turn Persecutors of them : i. e. to seek a revenge upon them for matters concerning their God, it being certain that none can deserve a persecution from his Neighbour.

These things ( our dearly beloved Brethren ) are all which at present we shall commend to you. The nature, and reasonableness of them is such as we are assured they have an evidence to all your consciences, either as necessary, or highly useful, only as we are prone to make excuses in any duty, and especially where the revival of it may seem to condemn our former neglect ;

neglect; so we are afraid least ( as to that part which relates to the order and worship of families ) we should hear some excusing themselves. Either,

1. *From want of time : or,*
2. *From want of fit matter in their families : or,*
3. *From want of parts and abilities ; or,*
4. *From the want in the world of servants that will be brought under such discipline.*

1. As to the first, we know there is a great difference of men as to leisure, and therefore ( as we said before ) we believe more of this nature is required from a *Daniel*, or a *David*, than from a private person : but,

1. This cannot be pleaded as to *Sabbath Dayes Service.*

2. It cannot be pleaded as to *Morning duties*, there the time may, and ought if need be, be redeemed from sleep.

3. So that all the dispute is about one half hour at night : and we leave it to every Christian that is serious and conscientious to think, whether this plea will not argue a greater



want of a good heart. Besides if this duty be necessary, we hope that our brethren, who, let their trade and business be what it will, will find a time to dine and sup, because they are naturally necessary; will also find a time for these duties which are spiritually necessary.

2. As to those who complain that *their families neither do, nor can consist of fit matter for these duties*. It only reacheth to *Catechism*, and that too only, as to servants; for surely Parents can command their children. As to them we say, *Servants* are either *Apprentices*, or *hired by the year*, or *by the day*; for the latter sort, they are not properly members of our families. For the former, doubtless, Masters have a great power over them; and though if they be stubborn, they cannot directly force them to this, yet they may keep them to such a strictness in labour, that they will be glad to purchase some relaxation there by a complying in this with the desires and endeavours of Governours for the good of their souls. For *yearly servants*, it is true they are but

but transient members of our family, but for their hired time, Governours have the same power over them, as over Apprentices; and there is no question, but better may be provided, if they will not comply. Besides, *Servants* that shall thus refuse, must be 1. Either such as have some particular different *Perswasion* in religion, who it may be understand much of the Principles of Religion: or, 2. Such *stubborn refractory persons*, as will be kept under no better Civil Government, than Religious, and so unfit to be continued in our houses. But we are verily perswaded that they are very few, who by fair and gentle treating with them might not be brought to this order: however, as to children the duties may proceed.

3. For those who complain *for want of parts* to discharge this work: The plea only holds as to *prayer*, and set discourses on Scripture. We should therefore commend to Christians,

1. That *no heads of families be patient till they have learned to read*, the want of this being a most inexcusable sin in these dayes, wherein are so many means for it.

2. That

2. That as many as possible would learn to write, and practice writing; and as many as can would learn to write Characters, writing by Characters being of infinite use in this work.

3. Though we cannot commend Christians tying themselves to forms of prayers made by others; Yet rather than not pray at all, that Christians would read a Prayer Morning and Evening to their families out of some good Book, such as the *Practice of Piety*, &c. at least at first setting up such a Reformation.

4. That no Christian would rest here, but being assured, that the gift of prayer is attainable by any Christian, that will take pains, that they would use all means to attain unto it, and to that end, we shall not only be ready ourselves to give such as come to us Directions; but we earnestly commend unto them, the reading and study of *Dr. Wilkin's Book concerning the gift of prayer*.

5. As to opening the Scriptures, and from them speaking to people. Though we could wish that as many as have time and leisure, would apply themselves

selves to get such knowledge as might enable themselves by study to find out the sense of a Text. Yet in regard that all cannot do that, we have before commended to our Brethren some such English Books, as may in this be helpful to them: And in regard every one hath not an ability to purchase such Books, we shall only offer it to our Brethren; whether four or five might not joyn together in buying such an English Library as they shall be advised to, each sharing in it, that so the whole number may be amongst them all, and ready to be mutually Lent: and if they please, they may so agree, as when any one dyeth, the others may purchase his share at a certain rate.

The most of these things Brethren (especially which concern the Worship of God in their families, and the private Sanctification of the Sabbath) though we believe them to be in a great measure the practice of many of you, and from your Parents you have been instructed in the practice of them: yet considering the great moment the reviving of Religion in families is of,

at such a time as this, and the great neglect in many families, occasioned possibly, for that some had not such good examples, in the families of their education, we have thought good to use the Apostle *Peters* expression, 2 *Pet.* 3. 1. *To stir up your minds by way of remembrance.*

Thus we conceive God may be glorified, our own souls, and the souls of all under our charges highly advantaged, Religion would be revived, preserved and propagated, and much of the glory of the Professors of *England* recovered; and the Adversaries of Religion and Godliness would gnash their teeth, to see every family become a Church, and the Nursery of that Religion, and lively practice of Godliness, which by so much profane scoffing, they endeavour to discourage, and by so much activity they labour wholly to extirpate.

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